

# **The Changing Nature of Warfare**

## **Transcript and Summary of a Conference, 25-26 May 2004 at The CNA Corporation**

**As a contribution to  
The Global Context 2020 Project  
of the National Intelligence Council**

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# The Changing Nature of Warfare

Report of a conference

In support of the Global Trends 2020 Project  
of the National Intelligence Council

25-26 May 2004

At The CNA Corporation, Alexandria, Virginia

## Foreword

On May 25-26, the CNA Corporation held a conference on the changing nature of warfare on behalf of the National Intelligence Council (NIC), as part of their Year 2020 project. Ambassador Robert Hutchings, Chairman of the NIC, opened the conference. He explained how the 2020 project is not meant to predict the future, but to provide a heuristic, that is, an instructive, view of how the world could unfold over the next two decades. This is best done through the creation of alternative futures. The alternatives the NIC has suggested include:

1. **Pax Americana.** This would be unilateral at the beginning, but how can the United States function in it over the long term? It will take lots of trade-offs and deals. The demands on the U.S. military would be substantial: the U.S. would be the regional sheriff.
2. **Davos world.** This is the most benign alternative future. It involves unfettered globalization. China and India would play by the rules. China would be the biggest country in sheer volume. The U.S. would prosper, but would be one of many. The unipolar moment would pass. The world would be benign as far as security goes, so there would not be too much conflict or military efforts by countries.
3. **New world disorder.** Conflicts would grow and spread. Clashes of civilizations could take place. The International institutions that have otherwise been trying to regulate globalization and world peace would fray, or collapse, or would be eroded in their effectiveness.

The conference attempted to address one aspect of this project, the changing nature of war, examining it from a variety of functional and regional angles. The objective of the conference was to explore the roots of potential conflicts; the characteristics of war that are likely to persist into the future; the emerging characteristics of war; and the impact of contemporary conflict on the United States, its allies, and potential enemies. In order to accomplish this, we set out a conference agenda with six panels:

1. Prospects for conflicts between today and 2020.
2. Persistent characteristics of war.
3. Emerging characteristics of war.
4. Impacts of contemporary conflict on friends and allies.
5. The same for other countries, including China.
6. What the U.S. has learned and how it thinks warfare will evolve.

We also had a lunch speaker address Latin America.

We commissioned 21 papers on these subjects, lined up six distinguished moderators/discussants, and assembled five well-known experts on war and military affairs to comment on the overall conference discussions. Of the 21 authors, five were from other countries (two from the United Kingdom, two from Israel, and one from Australia). Over the course of two days, this distinguished group of scholars gathered at The CNA Corporation in Alexandria, Virginia, to present their papers and engage in discussions among themselves and with a remarkably well-qualified audience from academia, government, and the military.

This report begins with the agenda of the conference, followed by a summary of the major themes that emerged during the discussions at the conference and in the papers. We have extended the themes to their implications for the year 2020 and for U.S. policy and interactions in the world.

We then include a report of the discussions at the conference, starting with the themes laid out in the agenda, the summary presentations by those who submitted papers, and the ensuing detailed commentaries and discussions. This report is our own record of the conference proceedings and does not imply consensus among those who participated.

Finally, the 21 papers submitted are included in the report, in the order of their presentations during the conference.

## Brief summary of the conference

The conference was about warfare, that is, violence, killing, and coping with these phenomena, not particularly geostrategic matters, or deterrence, or arms races, though some of those subjects inevitably came up.

If there were one major debate at the conference it was between those who said, “It’s Clausewitz forever—war will always be the same, across the spectrum,” vs. those who straight-lined today’s concerns to the future and argued, “It’s insurgencies that we’ll be fighting mostly from now through 2020, including global terror as a form of insurgency.” But the discussions were really more subtle than that and Clausewitz was explained to mean “war in the context of everything else,” including social, cultural, economic, and political dynamics.

It was generally recognized that there’s a migration of conflict down from the state-on-state level to internal conflicts and down to individuals, though one presenter made a strong case that Asia (from India-Pakistan to Korea) is a potentially threatening place for classic state-on-state warfare in the future.

Much of the discussion turned to the current situation in the Middle East, especially in Iraq, and thus to insurgency and terror, and so to the biggest current geostrategic problem, that of the Islamic world. As Art Cebrowski said, the invasion of Iraq was a master strategic move, right into the heart of “the Gap,” but Martin Van Creveld called it a huge blunder and said that the United States should get out.

Given the focus on Iraq, there was much discussion about the need to (a) fight insurgents, for which Special Forces were thought to be the most prominent instrument, but extending those kind of capabilities to include more of ground forces, and (b) the need for “Phase IV,” that is, stabilization efforts, which led to how it is necessary to fight the insurgency, not just insurgents, that is, to get to the roots of violence and terror rather than trying to just “kill them all.”

One remarkable and controversial insight that emerged at the conference was that the United States, in its carrying out of “the American Way of War,” had brought about a paradigm shift in its abilities to limit casualties and collateral damage, and yet this strategy makes it difficult for an enemy to realize he has been defeated if he is still largely intact. The example used was Fallujah—bypassed during the invasion and undamaged by air strikes.

Not that quelling insurgency is easy for the West to do. Van Creveld noted that the Israelis know the terrain, the language, the culture, the motives of their enemy, and have had brilliant tactics, etc., but have still not solved their problem with the Palestinians.

The notion that this trouble in the gap, or seam, of the world, was “a clash of civilizations” was resisted by a number of the participants, who noted that the Islamic world is not unified and it is a matter of radicals vs. traditionalists among Muslims and within predominantly Muslim states, with few moderate liberals in between.

Because Iraq and the Middle East dominated the discussion, it was hard for the participants to project warfare through 2020. Nonetheless, there was a sense that, for now, the “classic middle” of state-on-state, force-on-force, conventional warfare would be less prominent in the future as conflict shifted:

- To the left, i.e., to insurgencies and terrorists, and
- The right, to weapons of mass destruction.
- The danger, of course, is if the “left” and “right” were to be joined, that is, the global terrorists were to acquire WMD.

However, there wasn’t much discussion of the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) threat, although one presenter did discuss the nuclear weapons picture out through 2020.

The problem that surfaced out through 2020 was not so much the return of competing blocs, but of failing states. So if the views emerging from the conference were to be projected out through 2020, the following might be some dominant aspects (avoiding the word “trends”):

- The American Way of War, as it had emerged and applied since the end of the Cold War, will persist and evolve as the core of American war-fighting capability, though the U.S. doesn’t know quite where it might be applied next—then again, there was a 12-year gap between Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom, not too far off the 16 years between now and 2020.
- State-on-state conflicts are likely to continue to diminish, though there are known cases to fear: India-Pakistan, China-Taiwan, and Korea. We don’t know what new confrontations might arise. These situations drag on, and, as General Scales noted, 16 years can pass in the blink of an eye.
- The more advanced world will have to cope with failing states, though the numbers of such states have been declining since 1990. A new fear is whether any failing state may become a breeding ground for terrorists, especially among the predominantly Muslim countries, and in the particular case of Pakistan with its nuclear weapons.



- Global terror will persist and evolve, and it could get worse as Islamic states join the ranks of failing states, given their accumulating problems of governance.

But the period from now to 2020 may well be an era of “war in the context of everything else” as opposed to war as a central pursuit of states. It is also true that Europe may be leading the way in the decline of classic military establishments as rising costs and aging populations squeeze defense budgets. China remains the mystery here—does its economy continue to soar and, in the course of doing so, does its improved military become a major factor? Or does China become a basket case? And will the confrontation over Taiwan still exist in 2020?



# Conference Agenda

## “The Changing Nature of Warfare”

### Tuesday (25 May)

9:00—9:30. Opening remarks by **Rear Admiral Michael McDevitt**, USN (ret), Director, Center for Strategic Studies, The CNA Corporation, and **Ambassador Robert Hutchings**, Chairman, National Intelligence Council.

#### **9:30—11:00. Panel 1: Surveying the prospects for conflict around the world between today and 2020.**

Moderator/discussant: Dr Kurt Campbell, Senior Vice President, Henry A. Kissinger Chair, and Director of the International Security Program, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Washington, D.C.

Paper 1: *A Survey of Conflict Since the End of the Cold War: Is the Past a Prologue?*  
Dr. Monty Marshall, CIDCM, University of Maryland

Paper 2: Great Power Conflict and State on State Conflict. *“Possibilities of War: The Confluence of Persistent Contemporary Flashpoints and Worrisome New Trouble Spots.”*  
Dr. Kurt Campbell, CSIS

Paper 3: War against terrorists, religious conflicts, conflict with other non-state actors, military intervention in failed states/ civil wars and to prevent incipient genocides. *“Is the Future Destined to be One of a Constant State of Low Level Conflict?”* Dr. Thomas P. M. Barnett, Consultant

#### **11:15—12:45. Panel 2: What are the contemporary characteristics of war that are likely to persist into the future? How can we tell; are there signposts? And, what are the characteristics of contemporary conflict that are likely to be consigned to the dustbin of history by 2020?**

Moderator/discussant: Dr. Andrew Krepinevich, Executive Director, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA), Washington, D.C.

Paper 1: The Nature of War in the Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century: *“How has War Changed Since the End of the Cold War?”* Dr Colin Gray, Professor of International Politics and Strategic Studies, University of Reading (UK)

Paper 2: The American Way of War in the Post-Cold War Era: *“A Decade and a Half of transformation and Experimentation in Combat.”* Dr Henry Gaffney, The CNA Corporation, Alexandria, Virginia

Paper 3: The Evolution of Conflict through 2020: “*Demands on Personnel, Machines, and Missions.*” Dr. John Alexander, Consultant to the Joint Special Operations University

**1:30—3:30. Panel 3: What are the emerging characteristics of war?**

Moderator/Discussant: *How Technology and Military Transformation Could Change the Characteristics of War in 2020.* Dr. James Blaker, SAIC, Vienna, Virginia

Paper 1: Conventional Conflict as Experienced Since 1989. Which Characteristics Will Persist into the Future? “*The Characteristics of Conventional War in 2020.*” MG Robert Scales, USA (ret)

Paper 2: Unconventional Conflict; What Does the Future Hold? “*Dealing with Terrorists, Insurgents and Failed States in 2020.*” Mr. Ralph Peters

Paper 3: Will Possession of Nuclear Weapons Spread? What Role Might Nuclear Weapons Play in 2020? “*The Nuclear Weapons environment in 2020*” Dr. Daniel Whiteneck, The CNA Corporation, Alexandria, Virginia

**4:00—6:00. Panel 4: This panel and the one following it examined the impact contemporary conflict might have on foreign (friends’ and allies’) strategic policies.**

Moderator/discussant: Dr. Geoffrey Wawro, U.S. Naval War College

Paper 1: The European Experience in Contemporary Conflict. “*Out of Area Operations in The Balkans, Africa and the Middle East: What the Experience of Combat Means for the Future.*” Dr. Andrea Ellner, Lecturer in International Relations, University of Reading, and Centre for Defence and International Security Studies (UK)

Paper 2: The Asian Experience in Contemporary Conflict. “*Operations in Asia’s near Abroad: What the Experience of Combat and Insurgency Means for the future.*” Dr. Stuart Woodman, Australian Defence Force Academy

Paper 3: Contemporary Conflict Against Islamic terrorists. “*The Israeli Experience and Lessons for the Future.*” Dr. Martin Van Creveld, Hebrew University, Israel

**Wednesday 26 May**

**9:15—11:15. Panel 5: What might other countries have learned from post-Cold war conflict and how might they apply that knowledge in the future?**

Moderator/discussant: Lieutenant General Paul Van Riper, USMC (ret)

Paper 1. Perspectives from the Middle East. Islamic terrorism, a hostile Iran and Iraq, an unsettled Afghanistan and a continuation of the Arab-Israeli conflict could all remain

features of the 2020 environment. *“Fighting the Islamists: What Have They Learned and How are They Likely to Apply it?”* Dr. Anthony Cordesman, Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy, CSIS, Washington, D.C.

Paper 2. Perspectives from the Middle East. A Second View. *“Fighting Organized Armies from Islamic States: What Have They learned from the On-Going Conflict in Iraq?”* Dr. Zeev Maoz, Departments of Political Science, University of Michigan and Tel Aviv University, Israel

Paper 3. Perspectives from the Middle Kingdom. *“What has the PLA Learned, and How Might They Apply it in 2020?”* Dr. David Finkelstein, Director, Project Asia, The CNA Corporation, Alexandria, Virginia

**11:45 –12:45 Working Lunch. “Insurgencies in Latin America and what the Future Might Hold.”** Dr. David Spencer, Hicks & Associates, Vienna, Virginia.

**1:00—3:00 PM. Panel 6: What Has the U.S. Learned from Contemporary Conflict and How Does it Think Warfare will Evolve?**

Moderator/discussant: Dr. Thomas Keaney, School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), The Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C.

Paper 1: *“Where is U.S. Transformation Headed and Will It Change the Character of War?”* VADM Arthur Cebrowski, USN (ret), Director, Force Transformation, Office of the Secretary of Defense

Paper 2: What Went Wrong and What Should We Stop Doing? *“Trying Not to Repeat the Past, Bad Lessons that are Hopefully Learned.”* Dr. Michael O’Hanlon, Brookings Institution

Paper 3: *“Fighting Insurgent Campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq: Are there New Characteristics or will Old Verities Still be the Rule in 2020?”* Dr Steven Metz, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College

Paper 4: *“The Growing Role of Special Operations Forces: Will SOF Operations Become the Predominant Characteristic of the American way of War in 2020?”* Dr Stephen Biddle, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College

(An additional paper submitted for the conference was *“Force Structure for High- and Low-Intensity Warfare: The Anglo-American Experience and Lessons for the Future.”* Dr. Daniel Marston, Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, UK. Dr. Marston was unable to be presented at the conference.)

**3:15—5:00. Concluding Session:** A panel of experts reflected and commented on the conference and attempted to integrate the various threads of discussion into some overarching judgments.

**Moderator:** RADM Michael McDevitt, USN (ret), Director, CSS, The CNA Corporation

**Panelists:**

Dr. Thomas Keaney, SAIS

Dr. Harlan Ullman, CNAC

Dr. James Blaker, SAIC

Brig. Gen. Paulette M. Risher, USA, President, Joint Special Operations University

Lt. Gen. Paul Van Riper, USMC (ret)

# **The Changing Nature of Warfare Conference at The CNA Corporation 25-26 May 2004**

## **Transcript of the presentations and discussions**

### **Panel 1: Prospects for Conflict Around the World Between Today and 2020**

The purpose of this panel was to provide geo-strategic assessments of where and what kind of conflict situations the United States and its friends and allies might face in the future. The panel examined both prospects for great power conflict and other state-on-state conflicts. It also looked at conflicts associated with failed states, non-state actors such as terrorists, and internal conflicts/civil wars that could result in U.S. interventions. The panel included a presentation that provided a statistical context for conflict since the end of the Cold War.

### **Paper 1: Monty Marshall, A Survey of Conflict Since the End of the Cold War: Is the Past a Prologue?**

The main question posed for this paper is as follows: “Is the past 15 years, in terms of the variety and frequency of armed conflict, a useful guide in forecasting the future?” The information presented in this survey supports a mixed answer. The past is very good at predicting continuities, but very poor at predicting discontinuities. Systemic continuities are embedded in physical structures, environmental conditions, and social institutions; these are the most common occurrences. Discontinuities are rare events that dramatically alter the physical, environment, and/or social landscape(s). Standing in between systemic continuities and discontinuities are the possibilities for making meaningful adjustments that will improve the prospects for prediction.

The past 15 years, therefore, provide crucial information about changes and continuities in general systemic properties and dynamic qualities that can be used to bound the “realm of possibilities” and lay out the factors for creating alternative scenarios. But, the past fifteen years represent a substantial, qualitative change in the nature of global relations and to use only that very restricted time frame will very likely, and very severely, distort future projections. We need to place the post-Cold War period in the larger spatial-temporal context in order to better understand the nature of the changes that distinguish the more current period from the preceding, Cold War, period. In doing so, we gain additional information about the influential effects of the policy and technological environment on global conflict dynamics.

## **Conflict Since 1946**

Marshall noted that his study attempted to overcome shortcomings associated with looking at short (10-20 year) periods of time by examining conflict back to 1946. It provided multiple perspectives on general trajectories of global conflict dynamics, during both the post-World War II era and the post-Cold War period. This led to two general conclusions.

- The peak of large-scale conflicts in the system since 1946 was reached in 1990-1991. Since that time, there has been a 60 percent drop in conflict both within and between states.
- States with a mix of autocratic/democratic tendencies (“Anocracies”) have the greatest propensity for conflict. The models, however, cannot account for this phenomenon because there is a lack of historical examples. Pressures for democratization bring on greater instability.

## **Who is at Risk?**

When examined broadly, a key risk factor for instability is adverse regime change. Examples of that would be state collapse, revolution, or an autocratic succession to democracy. While these are precipitating factors, Marshall identified other factors, including weak regimes/states, systemic state discrimination against groups, societal underdevelopment, lack of “systemic integration” (being cut off from the currents of globalization), and the “bad neighborhood effect.”

In terms of regime type, democracies are more stable than autocracies. While autocracies may have a greater proclivity for change, the resulting strategy of clamping down on separatist movements and societal disharmony leads to greater autocracy, at least in the near term. At the same time, as autocracies begin to democratize, they run a higher risk of instability. On the other side of the spectrum, states that move from democracy toward autocracy tend to return to the status quo (i.e., democracy) after some period of time.

In terms of resources, the poorest of the poor states are not becoming more prone to violence and conflict. This may be because these states are under considerable external pressure to democratize. But they are the least likely to successfully transition toward democracy.

There are significant societal and social effects caused by warfare. These include non-reciprocal (i.e., one-way) resource transfers, damage to social networks, environmental degradation, human resource degradation, population dislocation, infrastructure destruction and resource depletion, diminished quality of life, and diminished societal integration. All of these effects lead to arrested development and an inability of nations to maintain peace within themselves.



## **Future Conflict**

There are 3 types of warfare: inter-state, ideological/revolutionary, and ethnic. Marshall, however, focused on ethnic warfare, noting that it possessed several characteristics: not spontaneous; persistent protests; government sanctioned social discrimination; territorial concentration of minority populations; established group identities in some form of structural movement organizations; regime instability; and foreign support to rebellious minorities. He stated that, once ethnic conflict broke out, the likelihood of future conflict was increased.

He noted several conflict trends in the 21<sup>st</sup> century:

- Continuation/escalation/recurrence of long-standing disputes and rivalries (protracted conflicts)
- Separatist movements
- Bad neighborhood effects (“ghetto-ization”)
- Black market control, “resource capture,” “siphoning,” and organized crime networks
- Mercenaries/trans-national terrorists
- Weak states prone to tactical terrorism/insurgency. There are currently 48 weak regimes, 33 states recovering from recent wars, and 25 societies experiencing serious warfare. In the past, the developed world ignored these failing states. This will likely change, assuming world pressure and focus.
- Terrorism will continue to be predominantly local. 90 percent of terrorist attacks are indigenous. International terror groups are an anomaly.

## **Paper 2: Kurt Campbell, *Possibilities of War: The Confluence of Persistent Contemporary Flashpoints and Worrisome New Trouble Spots***

Campbell began his talk with an anecdote about the difficulty of predicting the future. In 1985, the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University convened a distinguished group of international strategists, academic luminaries, prominent journalists, and accomplished policy-makers to consider the prospects for conflict at the turn of the century, just fifteen years away. The group was asked to speculate about the possibilities for war in an undefined international environment over the horizon. The results were:

- No one dared speculate about an end to the Cold War or the demise of a narrow bipolar alignment in global affairs.
- The discussants provided little consideration for the role of ideology in global affairs, given the apparent demise of the attractiveness of communism as an organizing concept for political life.
- There was no real reflection on global disease or the consequences of climate change.

- The technological advances that led to the revolution in military affairs were in their infancy and no one could imagine the breathtaking record of U.S. military achievements to follow—in Panama, the Persian Gulf War (I), Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq (II, part I).

The conference was a classic example of the limits of linear thinking, the unintended and sometimes subtle constraints imposed by "serious" policy audiences, and the tendency for any "out of the box" thinking to appear very conventional in hindsight.

### **Conflict in the Future**

Campbell said it is useful to ask three specific questions when it comes to the future of fighting: (1) what will be fought over; (2) who will do the fighting; (3) and with what will people fight. If the attacks of 9/11 have demonstrated anything, it is that the greatest threats to U.S. security in the period ahead probably come from non-state actors and that the U.S. homeland is perhaps the Achilles heel of global American hegemony. Any serious belligerent is likely to target U.S. domestic society in some way as part of its overall strategy. It is also the case that increasingly virulent technologies (cyber-transmitted, chemical, biological, nuclear, and potentially nano-technologies in the not too distant future) are becoming more available to highly motivated individuals with apocalyptic agendas. In this environment, it is sometimes difficult to imagine traditional state-on-state violence on a massive scale, but if 9/11 taught us another thing, it is to be prepared for surprises.

### **Asia as an Epicenter**

Campbell talked about the prospects for future state-on-state conflict, focusing on Asia. Asia is a potential epicenter of global conflict. No other region possesses dynamics that could spark a world conflict. Potential epicenters include the Korean peninsula, the Taiwan Strait, and India/Pakistan. Every factor for future state-on-state conflict is found in Asia. China is a rising power (and the most important country in Asia, not the United States), the environment is in flux, and Asia is economically dynamic, but profoundly insecure.

Since September 11, there has been little U.S. strategic focus on Asia. In the meantime, China has begun to fill the traditional U.S. role as honest broker in the region, especially with regard to Korea. As a consequence, whereas Asians used to worry about U.S. long-term interest in the region, today, they worry about the U.S. being preoccupied with short-term interests, for example, redeploying U.S. troops from Korea to Iraq.

Campbell noted that Asia has no long-term security framework, such as NATO. ASEAN is not strong enough to replace the U.S. pillar for security. The Asian perception is growing that the U.S. is not taking its role seriously in the region.

This could lead to increased chances of conflict. In the future, care should be given to states, such as Japan, that have in the past made the decision not to embrace the nuclear option, but given instability, could rethink this option. What combination of factors could produce such a tipping point? It can be hard to discern the onset of tipping, but once begun, it can be hard to stop.

### **Potential Triggers**

There are some scenarios that could trigger a major clash between one or more major powers in the years to come. While events such as energy shortfalls, the rise of nationalism, or arms races might trigger a major conflagration, Campbell argued that the greatest contributor to potential conflicts in the near distant future is the prospect of a strategic failure for the U.S. (as opposed to a military failure) in Iraq and the larger Middle East. America bogging down for a sustained period there is likely to lead to several potential outcomes, such as regional problems aggravated as a consequence of our policies in the greater Middle East, U.S. preoccupation away from Asia (the setting for the most intense traditional inter-state rivalries and the place where U.S. involvement is the greatest brake on overt rivalries), new prospects for nuclear proliferation, and a renewed reticence by the U.S. to exercise military force in pursuit of its interests.

It is difficult to imagine a strategic setback in Iraq that could match the intensity or duration of the Vietnam War's aftermath. Yet, in scarcely a decade after Vietnam, the U.S. had nearly completely recovered its position in Asia. The last two decades have been something of a golden age for American power in the Asia-Pacific region. It is difficult to imagine the U.S. retaining its influence or recovering its prestige so quickly in the Middle East should we suffer a similar strategic setback in Iraq.

### **Paper 3: Tom Barnett, *Does the U.S. Face a Future of Never-Ending Sub-national and Trans-national Violence?***

Barnett noted that sub-state violence is declining. The problem set is boundable and easily described as a grand historical arc of ever-retreating resistance to the spread of the global economy. Conflict will arise because despite these trends, and there is resistance in specific areas to the spread of the global economic system.

### **De-escalation of Mass Violence**

The post-Cold War era has witnessed an amazing “downshifting” of the source of threats to global stability. In this short span of history, the world has moved from an era in which global nuclear war was the dominant threat, through a transitional era in which it seemed that regional rogues would become the primary source of system instability, to one in which it is increasingly recognized that transnational or non-state actors will constitute the main source of violence—sometimes of a mass nature—that has the capacity to perturb, even in a significant fashion, the

functioning of the global economy. In effect, America's definition of the threat has de-escalated from an "evil empire" to "evil regimes" to "evil actors."

The North is currently engaged in conflict with individuals and is no longer focused on state-on-state warfare. This is in keeping with the trend toward the historic de-escalation of mass violence. First the Soviet Union was defeated, then the rogues, and now "terrorists are being run to ground."

### **The Problem is Becoming More Boundable**

Barnett pointed out that the ever-retreating resistance to the spread of the global economy is at the heart of argument for stability within the system. China is moving in the right direction. The North (i.e., Europe and North America), India, Russia, South Africa, and the industrialized states are functioning, meaning that 4.5 billion out of 6 billion people are living in stable environments. Therefore, the world is not descending into chaos.

Unfortunately, there exists a "non-integrating gap" in the international system. There, one-third of the global population has been the subject of 95 percent of U.S. "security exports." The resistance we see in this gap is not unique in history. Barnett pointed to the socialist movement in Europe (which failed), the revolutions in Russia (which failed), and most recently in China and other poor areas, such as Africa. Now, the Islamists want to remove a portion of humanity from the global rule set. Seen in this light, Barnett argues, the Global War on Terrorism is nothing more than an episode in a long historical arc associated with the expansion of the functioning core of the global economy.

### **Scenario Pathways and Changing Rule Sets**

Barnett then laid out a series of "scenario pathways," which can be used to illustrate potential plans of action for dealing with variety of problems and threats arising in "the gap" (rogue states, Islamic forces, failed states, threats to homeland defense, threats to national resources, humanitarian disasters). Essentially, these pathways suggest ways to integrate disconnected regions into the global economy. They also suggest sequences to focus on when dealing with a particular threat.

Examination of these scenarios led Barnett to conclude that major rule set changes are required. The first and most obvious rule-set change must occur within the U.S. Defense Department itself: moving off the paradigm of the near-peer competitor as a force-sizing principle. So long as the Pentagon views the Global War on Terror or interventions in internal conflicts as "lesser included," sufficient resources would not be devoted to those capabilities within the military required to deal with the operational challenges of eradicating the local, root causes of sub-national and transnational violence. In effect, planning for war against a near-peer competitor must be demoted to the position of a hedging strategy, with the bulk of such investment prioritized to the areas of small-scale contingency war-fighting

and long-term nation-building and peace-keeping roles and missions—including the shift of DOD funds to other agencies.

The problem with the U.S. military approach is exemplified by the fixation on anti-access. There is no battle space the U.S. cannot access. The focus on anti-access leads to a focus on the beginning of conflict, to the neglect of the follow-on phases. The U.S.'s major problem is staying power. Focus on the initial phase undermines our ability to conduct follow-on phases. The Powell Doctrine of the use of an overwhelming force that is then extracted as soon as possible is at the heart of this problem.

But to achieve the tasks implied in this approach will mean that the United States must likewise forge three important new rule sets:

- 1) Internally, the U.S. must rebalance its own force to reflect the new focus on operations other than the now classic short, highly technological “effects-based” war meant to take down a regime and its military;
- 2) Externally, the U.S. must recast its national security strategy to reflect the overriding goal of extending globalization, or the connectivity associated with the global economy, thus abandoning a balance-of-power mentality vis-à-vis other putative peer or near-peer competitors in the military sphere (not the economic); and
- 3) Within the community of advanced nations, the U.S. must work to establish an A-to-Z rule set (e.g., international organizations with generally recognized procedures) for the managing of politically bankrupt states, i.e., those that are utterly corrupt or suffering some other crisis of governance.

The sequencing of these new rule sets is of great importance. The United States must first demonstrate a commitment to establishing a “peace-waging” force within its ranks that may ultimately constitute a main instrument of power projection across those regions logically targeted in a Global War on Terrorism. With that commitment demonstrated, the U.S. may well subsequently enjoy greater success in attracting coalition partners for the “back half” (post-conflict) nation-building efforts associated with otherwise successful military interventions involving regime change. Once that full-spectrum capacity is demonstrated, the global community will be able to move in the direction of enunciating the logical global rule set that describes how politically-bankrupt states may be successfully rehabilitated and reintegrated into the global economy.

The major obstacles to this transformation are internal to the U.S., particularly in its fixation with China as the next peer competitor. We need a movement to embrace more diverse and smaller conflicts. Iraq could become a transformative event, highlighting the need for such changes. That is, Iraq transforms transformation.

## **Highlights from the Panel 1 Discussion**

### **U.S. Security and Globalization**

Several questions were raised about the future of U.S. security and the impact of globalization. One participant noted his concern that exclusionary rule sets in economics could beget exclusionary rule sets in politics, which then beget exclusionary rule sets in security. He was particularly concerned that a rising Asia, led by China, could separate from the rest of the core states that support globalization. Another participant responded that it is only possible to wage war in the context of everything else. China has to stay connected if it is to keep its economy growing enough to solve its employment problem. A major state-on-state war in Asia could sour investments.

One participant was struck by the optimism of Barnett and Marshall and asked, What if the GWOT bogs down? Another participant argued that another dramatic terrorist strike on Washington could derail U.S. planning. It is wrong to think that the gap wants to join the core. The Islamic world wants to retreat. Iraqis and Palestinians are not ready to integrate.

### **Emergence of Peer Competitors**

Per Barnett, no near peer has arisen because the U.S. exports security. But, one concern is that, as new competing currencies have emerged, these are diminishing the ability of the U.S. to fund its export of security or to secure financing from anyone else.

One panelist stated that China would emerge as a regional power. But, it should be noted that the U.S. has been badly wrong in the past about its predictions of hegemonic power. First we worried about the Soviet Union, and then about Japan. Wolfowitz in 1991 feared both Japan and Germany. We talked about “the tragic decline of the U.S.” Now we talk about China. We’ve badly underestimated China. China could easily turn into a huge basket case.

Another participant noted that the Chinese believe that, while their tactics may have moderated, their strategy has not changed. They are buying in, in a major way, to global integration.

### **How Secure is the United States?**

One panelist pointed out that any dedicated strategic adversary in the future will probably try to strike Washington, D.C., or New York City. In the former case, care should be taken to disperse government functions. Another panelist argued that the U.S. is already an extraordinarily distributed state. Washington is not so important. We are not so vulnerable, but we are also not so imaginative as to

foresee what our enemies can do to us. The only real threat would arise if any enemy “could do September 11 in a sustained way.”

Several questions focused on what the U.S. is trying to accomplish and how much it is willing to spend or risk to achieve its goals. A panelist said we should question any strategy that puts the U.S. capital at 50 percent risk. Anti-globalizers can at best take symbolic action. The lack of armed conflict can facilitate democratic transitions. The U.S. resorting to its own power can cause more ripples in the wrong direction by creating instability that causes vulnerability. The transition to democracy is facilitated by the lack of overt, armed conflict. Democracies are inefficient at handling internal conflict.

### **The Nature of Future Conflict**

One participant argued that if inter-state war is defined more liberally than Marshall had done, then the last decade has seen an increase in the propensity of this kind of warfare. It is not just army-on-army. It is state-on-state. Since 1991, there have been 8 wars, and the U.S. was involved in 4 of them, so he claimed the incidence is going up. These wars are just not as violent as previous wars because of the U.S. controls on collateral damage and not killing civilians.

Two panelists rejected that the wars the U.S. was involved in were state-on-state wars. These were events where the U.S. punished rule-breakers. We are experiencing success against terrorism. We are fighting the terrorists abroad and not at home and, hence, we have reflected terrorism back to the Middle East—this is a good thing. But we are trying to connect the Middle East to globalization faster than they are trying to disconnect. We are using professional soldiers to keep the terrorists from striking us. All terrorism is ultimately local.

Several participants argued that this interpretation does not hold up to scrutiny. Iraq does not help in the global war on terrorism. The U.S. must attack the terrorist support structure—its roots—because just killing the terrorists is not a deterrent to their recruitment. If you concentrate just on the killing, you generate terrorists at an increasing pace. It is a social phenomenon; they expect to die.

Another panelist noted the irony of September 11 is that it reduced inter-state terrorism, but the lethality of terrorist strikes have increased (400 dead in 2002, 600 in 2003, 800 in 2004). What has happened is that the GWOT has “removed the amateurs from the terrorist ranks.”





## **Panel 2: Contemporary Characteristics of War and Prospects for the Future**

This panel focused on the last 15 years of conflict in order to assess what the “current way of war” is and reach judgments about how long-lived and how relevant current operational concepts will be in the future. The intent was not to focus on the utility of various weapons systems, but rather to attempt to assess whether the attributes of today’s force such as jointness, air power, and precision will be as important in 16 years as they are today. This issue recognizes that a good deal of today’s inventory of equipment will still be in the inventory in 2020, but may be used in different ways.

### **Paper 1: Colin Gray, *How has War Changed Since the End of the Cold War?***

Gray prefaced his remarks with four caveats about futurology:

- Don’t neglect war’s political, social, and cultural contexts. It is not an autonomous phenomenon. War cannot be divorced from its context.
- Defense establishments prepare for problems they prefer to solve rather than those that a cunning enemy might pose.
- Trend spotting is not a good guide to the future. Trend analysis is a faulty science. Trends come in bunches and their consequences make the future. Understanding these consequences is an art, not a science.
- Surprises happen.

Gray’s basic premise was that the basic nature of warfare is unchanging. The nature of war in the twenty-first century is the same as it was in the twentieth, the nineteenth, and indeed, in the fifth century BC. In all of its more important, truly defining features, the nature of war is eternal. No matter how profound a military transformation may be, and strategic history records many, it must work with a subject that it cannot redefine.

Throughout his speech he referenced Clausewitz, who posits that “[all] wars are things of the same nature.” Also, he advises that war has two natures, “objective” and “subjective.” The former is permanent, while the latter is subject to frequent change. The character of war is always liable to change, as its several contexts alter, but its nature is fixed.

Given the technophilia that is so characteristic of the U.S. defense community, Gray said it is useful to recall the Clausewitz’s judgment that “very few of the new manifestations in war can be ascribed to new inventions or new departures in ideas. They result mainly from the transformation of society and new social conditions.” Above all else, Clausewitz insists that war is an instrument of policy. What that means is that war should be waged not for the goal of victory, necessary though

that usually is, but rather for the securing of an advantageous peace. There is more to war than warfare.

### **Conflict in the Post-Cold War Era**

Gray argued that, for the past fifteen years, America's foes have been Panamanians, Iraqis, Somali clansmen, Bosnian Serbs, Serbs again, hapless Talibans, Iraqis in a return fixture, and, of course, the well-networked fanatics of al Qaeda. A tradition of victory is very important, but it is apt to feed uncritical expectations of victory in the future. It can mislead people into discounting the contextual factors critical to success in favor of the military prowess that was demonstrated. It is worth recalling what went wrong, as well as what went right.

It is more likely than not that most of America's enemies in the near future will continue to be at least as awkwardly and inconveniently asymmetrical as they have been over the past fifteen years. However, it would be grossly imprudent to assume that they will all be led by politicians as grandly strategically incompetent as Saddam Hussein or Slobodan Milosevic.

The several complex wars of Yugoslavian Succession, the wars of Soviet Succession in the Caucasus region, and the near perpetual warfare across West and Central Africa—including Sudan and Somalia—have persuaded some commentators that we have entered an era of 'new wars.' We are told that the trend in warfare is sharply away from state-on-state conflicts. Instead, the tide is running for inter-communal and transnational ethnic and religious strife. These are wars about identity, as well as about historic wrongs, myths and legends; they are not about reasons of state.

Gray argues that this interpretation is wrong and short sighted. There has always been inter-communal strife. It is a global phenomenon today, but then it always has been. When great empires and federations are dissolved, there are belligerent scrambles by communities to seize their historic opportunity to achieve the sovereign homeland that they crave. In the political context of the 1990s, the prevalence of internal warfare was entirely to be expected. Such warfare will continue in the future, though probably with less frequency.

The United States provides the balance of power in the international environment. It is the hegemonic power for the moment. But this is a temporary condition. There is no reason to believe that other states will forever be dissuaded from competing. State-on-state warfare is down for the moment. But this will change because decisive state-on-state conflict is suppressed only by the momentary supremacy of the United States.

Military transformation is strategically disappointing because, while transformation may address military efficiency, it does nothing to fix strategic faults and missteps. High tech advantages are ephemeral because technology diffuses. U.S.

transformation does not provide analysis and insight into the political basics of war, which are otherwise necessary if war is to be waged well.

Religiously motivated terror will be the threat of the current era, but moderate Muslims will ultimately vanquish Al-Qaeda. By 2020, environmental pressures will lead to increased pressure for territorial grabs, which will lead to the reappearance of Great Power conflict.

### **Future of Warfare**

Gray drew four conclusions as a way of looking at the future of conflict and war:

- First, the “objective” nature of war, as Clausewitz put it, is not changing. His theory of war will apply to all modes of armed conflict in the future.
- Second, it is essential to appreciate the significance of the several contexts of war, in addition to the military context. Above all else, the leading driver towards, and in, war, is the political context.
- Third, war is about the peace that will follow; it is not a self-validating occurrence. A heavy focus on military transformation tends to obscure the enduring fact that war is about a lot more than warfare.
- Fourth and finally, one should never forget that over time all trends decline and eventually expire. More accurately perhaps, trends influence each other, and particularly when under the shock of some great surprise, they may change their character radically, indeed in an apparently nonlinear fashion. The challenge to the defense planner is not to spot the trends of this era, but rather to guess what their consequences may be.

### **Paper 2: H. H. Gaffney, *A Decade and a Half of Transformation and Experimentation in Combat***

A distinctive American Way of War emerged in the post-Cold War period as the United States engaged in nine sizable combat or near-combat (Haiti) operations, beginning with Panama in 1989, and continuing through Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003. This American Way of War is characterized by deliberate, sometimes agonizing, decision-making, careful planning, assembly and movement of “overwhelming” forces, the use of a combination of air and ground forces, joint and combined, applied with precision, especially by professional, well-trained military personnel. How this American Way of War resolves the situations is more problematic—resolution does not automatically flow from the capabilities applied.

### **Characteristics of the American Way of War**

The characteristics of the American Way of War can be summarized as follows:

1. Aside from Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. got involved for reasons particular to the situations, not because it was pursuing some grand strategy. If there was one

element in common among most of them it was that the U.S. was in pursuit of an obnoxious leader, i.e., it seeks regime change.

2. The U.S. has been reactive. That is, most of the situations in which it chose to engage in combat haven't arisen out of the blue, but have simmered for some time before U.S. intervention, nor has the U.S. reacted fast. Scratch one myth—about the need for speed of response. Operation Iraqi Freedom was preemptive.
3. In most cases, the U.S. carefully planned the operation before it started. The cases where the planning was not so careful—Somalia and Kosovo—turned out to be the messiest. The regional Combat Commander (i.e., the Unified Commander) gets to do the planning. But this planning has been subject to intense and prolonged iteration with Washington, including at the political level.
4. The U.S. has generally sought international sanction for its operations—except for Panama. It has also sought coalition partners and other international support. This was true even for Operation Iraqi Freedom, though the depth of dedication to this effort has been questioned.
5. The U.S. has been remarkably successful in getting bases. This explodes the myth the access around the world is drying up. Of course, it takes hard diplomatic work, not always successful—we don't get everything or everywhere we ask for.
6. Operations tend to be under tight political control, in part because they have tended to be short. Political control also entails minimizing own casualties (which the U.S. military wants to do anyway, especially in the age of the All-Volunteer Force) and avoiding collateral damage. Political sensitivities are reflected in this characteristic.
7. U.S. forces operate joint and combined. The operation is never given to just one service (though it was very heavy Army in Panama). The U.S. has preferred to use overwhelming force and not to enter operations piecemeal.
8. The most salient characteristic of the post-Cold War period is that the U.S. likes to lead with air strikes. It goes hand in glove with minimizing own casualties and, as strike capabilities have evolved, controlling collateral damage.
9. The “major combat phases” have tended to be rather short—even for Kosovo, which was the longest (78 days—though we didn't know that when we were in it). Peacekeeping has been a much longer affair—see #12 below.
10. But air strikes alone have proved insufficient to end or resolve conflicts. The experience of the 1990s has shown that either ground forces or diplomacy are needed to wrap up the conflict.
11. The U.S. has gotten to test and evolve its capabilities across these cases. Especially important has been the growing networking of capabilities, especially for air strikes.

12. The U.S. can't go home easily. It did for Panama, Haiti, and Somalia. But it has ended up with long residual operations for Iraq, Bosnia/Kosovo, and Afghanistan. Iraq has been particularly difficult, and one has to say that whatever it is called—from Phase IV or Stabilization to Nation-Building—hadn't been part of “the American Way of War.”

### **The American Way of War and the Future of Warfare**

Gaffney argued that the U.S. belief in the importance of technology, precision, and synthesis of forces—coupled with professional, trained personnel—will persist into the future. It is an outgrowth of Cold War planning. The belief in lighter/faster forces may have been reinforced by some successes, but is now questioned by the experience in Iraq.

No peer competitor has emerged since the fall of the Soviet Union. Moreover, the countries that still cause concern—North Korea, Iran—may not be disposed to attack their neighbors and the rest of the world is probably reluctant to preemptively attack them. This makes it difficult to know “where to apply the American Way of War next.”

The American way of war is not easily applied in the global war on terror, that is, against scattered small groups of individuals. The American Way of War may be more a “way of battle.” If another catastrophic event like September 11 were to occur, it could lead to dramatic enhancements to homeland defense, for which the American Way of War is not appropriate. At the opposite end of the spectrum, if the U.S. were to divert resources to nation-building, these capabilities would be in addition to its war-fighting capabilities.

The American Way of War is thus not a grand strategy. Those who plan it are detached from world economics. But it is now at the core of U.S. defense thinking, and is likely to be preserved through 2020. However, the U.S. defense budget may well stagnate over time under the twin pressures of the federal budget deficit and the needs of an aging population, which would lead to reductions in force structure and restrict the acquisition of expensive replacement systems, but there would still be much latitude for the incremental improvement of capabilities. In any case, the American Way of War applies to the vertical scenarios—the battle in the course of history—while we now face a long horizontal scenario—the global war on terror.

### **Paper 3: John Alexander, *The Evolution of Conflict through 2020: Demands on Personnel, Machines, and Missions***

Alexander is pessimistic about the evolution of conflict through 2020 and the ability of the United States to deal with it. The GWOT lacks the specificity needed for the U.S. military to develop planning against it. Without such specificity, we are destined to arrhythmic oscillations of armed interventions against an array of amorphous opponents. A catastrophic terrorist attack could punctuate history at any given time. While there would be an emotional outcry demanding immediate and

possibly irrational response, success in countering the adversaries depends on comprehensive contingency planning for events that are currently beyond our imagination.

In his paper, Alexander argues that we have entered the next global confrontation (World War X), and it is ideologically based. It is the result of a clash of civilizations, it is religious, and it is broader and more complex than GWOT. The U.S. does not understand the threat. There is a basic incompatibility of goals between the Islamic and Western worlds. The Mujaheddins' goals are to destroy the Western way of life.

The primary determinant in whether or not we emerge victorious will be the formal recognition of the nature of this conflict and realization that we are already engaged. While military forces will play a substantial role in this conflict, the outcome of World War X will be determined by other factors including economic strength, sustained public will, and changes in the availability and distribution of energy resources.

### **Types of future wars**

Three types of conflicts are likely between now and 2020. Some of these wars, especially if initiated by foreign powers, could appear quite traditional. When and how America intervenes could greatly influence the nature of the conflict. The three types are:

- Overt war. The primary focus of senior political and military leadership in the U.S. will be on overt war such as our invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. Several traditional adversaries will remain of concern, such as North Korea.
- Covert war. The continuation of GWOT will lead to the expansion of covert operations to more of the globe, particularly to those nations that harbor and support terrorists, such as Afghanistan, Central America, and Africa.
- Outsourced war (using international security firms). Outsourced wars have begun in earnest. There have always been mercenaries, but future conflicts will take the concept to new levels. Proxy wars are undergoing a metamorphosis and will emerge in the form of nongovernmental outsourced wars.

### **Operational Considerations**

America's supremacy in traditional military operations will remain unchallenged through 2020. Defense budgets and force structure will focus on our ability to deter or defeat conventional forces with overmatching military capabilities, including weaponry. Concurrently, there will be comprehensive preparation for unconventional engagements, post conflict, and stability operations.

As for operations in 2020:

- U.S. conventional doctrine is sound.
- Strategic lift will be critical.

- Our enemies will seek to attack our vulnerabilities.
- Effective homeland defense is unclear.
- Inter-agency relations will have to be strengthened.
- We know we have to engage in comprehensive preparation for all phases of the war, including post-conflict.
- The focus on precision in the use of armaments will continue.

### **Future of Conflict**

Alexander argued that large static wars between conventional forces have fallen into the dustbin of history. What has emerged are protracted conflicts on the margin of tolerance. Terrorism and indirect attacks are the norm. To meet the operational tempo, standing forces must be increased and the personnel system revamped. Interagency cooperation must become seamless and artificial boundaries abolished. Actionable intelligence becomes paramount. The kill chain is reduced from hours to single-digit minutes.

Special operations forces will be the surgical tools that shape the battlefields. They will avert some wars. Some they will mitigate. For still others, they will be the units that pave the way for the sledgehammer that will drive a stake into the hearts of our enemies. Then, they will help rebuild countries.

Our adversaries will continue to thrust at the inherent weaknesses of a democratic and open society. Foremost is the battle for public perception, at which we have performed dismally. The core issues are conflicting belief systems. This demands a better understanding of the nature of conflicts we face, the ability to establish the parameters of the war, and the wisdom to understand the strategic implications of the use of force. It is at our peril that we continue to define conflict in anachronistic terms.

### **Dr. Andrew Krepinevich—Discussant**

Krepinevich argued that U.S. domination over the last 15 years is forcing changes in how competitors compete, but they cannot possibly do so on the scale of the Soviet Union.

He does not see the nature of warfare evolving linearly. The notion that state-on-state conflict is dead is wrong. States find many reasons (other than economic) to go to war. Large-scale competition could return.

War since the end of the Cold War has led to the American Way of War where there is no conventional opponent. Operation Iraqi Freedom was the acme of blitzkrieg—in a world that may be passing. Rogues want nuclear weapons instead. Or, what if a nuclear state were to fail or make transfers to others? What would a second nuclear regime look like? Lots of taboos might be thrown out the window.

Issues and notions of deterrence have changed.

GWOT is a misnomer. The United States is involved in a counter-insurgency versus an opponent with different values and that has access to means that could cause enormous destruction. How to deter them is a difficult question. As the world globalizes, the vulnerabilities increase.

War is temporal. The American Way of War stresses the virtue of winning short wars, but ignores the fact that the enemy may have the wherewithal to stick it out and win the longer war. The U.S. does like regime change—more of that was done during the Clinton Administration. But it turns out we can't disengage from Haiti, Somalia, or Rwanda (but the U.S. never was engaged in Rwanda) if terrorists are there.

The advent of the age of precision has led to competitors seeking counter strategies to blunt U.S. technology. Precision warfare may have enabled the U.S. to cause mischief (e.g., regime change) because it could do it more cleanly. This has led to a reduction in thought given to exit strategies.

The question is when will the U.S. reach imperial overstretch? How does the U.S. impose costs on the terrorists and they on us? There are two conflicting strategies: (1) the U.S. desires to rid the international environment of WMD versus (2) the opposition's determination to fight the West with the resources at their disposal. We need to rethink deterrence in light of the new enemy. How can we reassure allies? Preemption as a strategy has taken on a bad name, but it may grow in value. Surprises and discontinuities are still likely to be with us.

How many options do we build versus having the capability to rapidly expand them? The importance of metrics to identify options and the ability to use them rapidly is growing.

## **Highlights from the Panel 2 Discussion**

### **Planning for the Peace, Defining How We Fight**

The panel discussion began with two questions: How do we inculcate the notion that the outcome and peace define the war into how the U.S. fights future conflicts? What outcomes do we want from war? One panelist noted that these questions are tied to how we educate those in high office. Getting the military drivers and the politicians together is hard. The U.S. has a history of inadequate attention to the use of force. This could be cultural. The U.S. is good at tactics, but not at winning the peace. It lacks understanding of what war is about in the long term. How a country wages war needs to be linked from the beginning of the conflict to an exit strategy. Leadership needs to understand Clausewitz. The U.S. is good at taking down regimes, but not good at building up countries from the rubble. The consequence could be anarchy. Another participant pointed out that U.S. politicians no longer



have military experience. This has led to an emphasis on the quick victory and the quick exit strategy.

One panelist opined that the U.S. has relied too much on decapitation strategy—what he called the Martian strategy: “Take me to your president.” The U.S. needs to understand the diversity of weaknesses in states, and not just obsess about the leader. With regard to Clausewitz, the problem in the U.S. is that the military does not understand the political run-up to war.

In response to several questions on the American Way of War, one panelist noted that the U.S. does more than just focus on the war of the moment. It does more than just major operations, to include engagement, strategic nuclear deployment, shows of force as appropriate, etc. These major combat operations of the U.S. accounted for only 6 percent of the total days in the period, and most of the cases involved only a portion of U.S. forces.

Another panelist argued that U.S. military dominance is unmatched in history. U.S. hegemony stretches to all continents. The U.S. dominates in all battle spaces. Therefore, U.S. cannot just focus on one thing. It must do everything all the time. The U.S. must be preeminent in all military environments if it is going to succeed in its sheriff’s role.

### **Legitimacy of Conflict**

There were several questions related to the continued legitimacy of conflict as a means of settling disputes. One participant questioned whether the UN will ever stand up and assume its rightful role. A panelist lamented that he is not optimistic. The UN needs to reach a consensus, which U.S. impatience can make difficult. The U.S. has done things the UN condemned others for doing in earlier wars (e.g., submarine warfare against economic targets). But September 11 increased the freedom of action by the U.S. If your back is to the wall, you are capable of anything.

The question of legitimacy of conflict sparked a debate between two panelists. One argued that winning defines the legitimacy of the nature of warfare. This was challenged by another panelist, who stressed that this is not always the case: legitimacy is hurt when you go to war on false premises.

Still another panelist noted that desperation often leads to desperate measures and legitimization of tactics. The U.S. has been successful in conventional war because its actions have been based on sound theory and doctrine. This is not the case in unconventional warfare. The U.S. does not have an adequate theory of counter-insurgency. Its armed forces have never liked irregular warfare, thus it rarely does it well. If the U.S. military were to embrace Clausewitz it could overcome this shortcoming, since his works apply to the full spectrum of warfare.

One participant challenged the contention that the U.S. military excels at conventional war. World War I, World War II, and Korea are not great examples of U.S. conventional war. "You crushed ants." U.S. excellence is an illusion. There is no more conventional war. It ended in 1945.

The panelists did not argue that point. They agreed that the situation in Iraq may discredit U.S. interventions in the future, even though such interventions may be required. They were not confident that the U.S. will be able to learn the lessons on how to win the peace. Peacekeeping and stabilization operations of the future may stymie the U.S. military culture of elaborate pre-planning of combat operations. The American excellence in conventional war can be sidetracked by elusive enemies. The U.S. problems in the Middle East can dissuade them from attempting to solve problems in the future.

### **The Clash of Civilizations**

Several participants argued that basing thinking about future conflict on the notion of a clash of civilizations is dangerous. Most casualties of the last few decades are within civilizations, not a result of wars between civilizations. Conflicts within the Islamic world have caused more deaths than outsiders have. There is a conflict between radicals and traditionalists within the Islamic world. There is no liberal movement in any of the states to keep these forces in check. It is, therefore, wrong to build U.S. strategy off a notion of the clash of civilizations. One panelist retorted that while strife has existed within the Islamic civilization, U.S. actions have set the Islamic world against the Western world. The Islamic world is burdened by population growth and a lack of secular education. He held to his original belief that future conflict is more likely to be between groups aligned by their beliefs, rather than based on anachronistic and externally imposed geographic boundaries.

### **Panel 3: The Emerging Characteristics of War**

This panel addressed the emerging characteristics of war at two levels:

- First, will “the universe” of conflict continue to occur below the nuclear threshold and will it continue to be characterized by a blend of high-end state-versus-state and unconventional war? Or, alternatively, will unconventional, special operations, police work, and a ubiquitous dependence on intelligence grow into the principal characteristics of conflict, while “classic” organized state militaries are used mainly as a support and deterrent force?
- Second, this panel looked at the operational level of conflict to identify emerging new concepts of operations, such as the use of unmanned systems, which could have a profound effect on the nature of war. The issue was whether technology would change the way that low intensity and unconventional conflicts are waged by 2020?

#### **Paper 1: Bob Scales, *The Characteristics of Conventional War in 2020***

Scales claimed that, judging from past experience, the next 15 years will produce very little change in the nature and character of warfare. Nor will the technologies, structures, and apportionment of the U.S. defense establishment change all that much either. Bureaucratic friction, fiscal inertia, and the traditional Cold War fixation on big ticket programs and platforms will ensure that apportionment of the budget among services and agencies will remain about where it is today.

The enemies most challenging to our vital interests will continue to challenge them in familiar ways. Systems and organizations currently undergoing transformation will continue along expected courses. Change will occur on the margins, driven more by changes in the enemy’s attitudes and actions toward the United States than by any farsighted directional shift by either enemies or by U.S. policy-makers anticipating a new era of warfare.

#### **Red-Driven Future**

During the Cold War, dominance of the global strategic environment allowed the United States in large measure to influence the course of military confrontations and more often than not the actions of the enemy. The Soviet Union might have reacted forcefully to American actions, but ultimately they danced to the tune played by the United States. In this new era of conflict, it is the United States that must play to the tune composed by others, whose actions remain both unfamiliar and difficult to anticipate. The enemy’s cycle of adaptation is faster than ours. We’re the victims of what our enemies are doing. In a word, the initiative has shifted to

the other side. The course of conflict, its nature and shape will be determined by red, not blue.

Adversaries will continue to internalize the lessons from recent conflicts. The U.S. will dominate the middle of the spectrum. Those who can do Western warfare will not fight us. Those who cannot will engage us from two possible directions. The more solidly the United States dominates the middle the more likely an enemy will seek advantage at the ends. They have learned that the only profitable way to challenge American conventional superiority will be to threaten at the extreme ends of the spectrum: either on the right by possessing nuclear weapons and demonstrating the resolve to use them to impede American intrusion, or on the left, where unconventional methods will allow a disadvantaged adversary the means to turn a short sharp war into a lengthy and costly war of attrition.

### **Future Trends**

The war against a terrorist ideology will continue to demand that the United States focus on its Middle Eastern adversaries, both state and non-state. Losing a conflict there exposes America's most vulnerable center of gravity: available fossil fuels. While other regions may harbor terrorists, only in the Middle East are the densities of Islamic fundamentalists sufficient to create a mass of evil sufficient to threaten the vital interests of the United States. Perhaps in the distant future enemies may appear in other regions, but for now the only true threat comes from the Middle East.

From a grand strategic perspective not much will change over the next fifteen years. In spite of the certainty of the threat from the left (i.e., from irregular, or guerrilla, or insurgent warfare), the United States has no choice but to remain strong at all points along the spectrum. Most of the nation's resources will be devoted to holding the center. Without question, the maintenance of overwhelming air and sea strength must remain a cornerstone of American defense policy. In the future as the practical application of war-making activity shifts toward the left, conventional air and sea weapons will increasingly become instruments more for conventional deterrence rather than weapons to be employed in great numbers against competent enemies who possess and can use them effectively.

This change in war-making emphasis will demand a subtle realignment of defense priorities in which air and sea components will contribute to a strategic holding action intended to hedge the advantage in these dimensions. The long term goal will be to build and improve air and sea capabilities just enough so that America might remain uncontested on the seas and in the air while committing the Air Force and Navy to the greater and most dangerous task of improving their capabilities for supporting a protracted Middle Eastern ground war fought at the center-left of the spectrum.

Scales argued that the United States' most vulnerable center of gravity is on the ground. We need to game that as if we were Red because our enemies have learned that our most vulnerable center of gravity is on the ground. Their greatest challenge is to prepare the ground to best defeat us. The 200-by-200 kilometer air, ground, space, and maritime-networked battle space, as described in the early 1990s by Admiral Owens, is dead and most of the future action will be on the ground.

The enemy will be remote, for they have learned the lesson that America military prowess diminishes with distance and remoteness. Since the enemy controls the strategic initiative, he will choose points of conflict in the farthest corners of the region or even in more remote battlegrounds at the periphery of Middle Eastern territories. The enemy will continue to become more unapproachable by seeking to hide in the most remote sanctuary located at the very extreme corners of the Islamic world and, in some cases, in remote areas on the periphery of the Middle East—in Africa to be sure and perhaps in Islamic regions of Asia. He will search for sanctuary anywhere he wants and we will have to chase him there.

### **The U.S. Military Response**

Given new realities those few opportunities for reshaping American military forces over the next decade and a half should be governed by several new realities and shaped by new initiatives. The need for protracted conflict at distant places against a determined and dispersed enemy will eventually force a convergence of roles and functions between those charged with doing virtually all of the fighting and dying: Marine, Army and Special Operations close-combat forces. These forces will be structured and trained to become more autonomous, with a capability for fighting across the entire spectrum of land conflict. They will be required to move seamlessly between all levels of war and will acquire the ability to shift without interruption or pause from fighting to humanitarian tasks and back again as the exigencies of war demand. These combat forces will become multifunctional as well as multidimensional. They will increasingly be required to perform a variety of tasks tangential to killing skills, such as intelligence, medicine, civil-affairs, civic action, information operations, direct action, nation building, etc.

## **Paper 2: Ralph Peters, Dealing with Terrorists, Insurgents, and Failed States in 2020**

Peters began his talk by agreeing with the notion that the nature of warfare does not change. Warfare is about “killing the enemy until he knows he is dead.” The notion of bloodless warfare is ludicrous. He praised attrition as essential. All wars are wars of attrition. The terrorists began their war on the West 20 years ago.

While you may not be able to kill your way out of this problem, you can make the problem a great deal smaller by killing enough of the right people. It is impossible to reason with the terrorists.

The next two decades will challenge us with technologies we cannot anticipate, with implacable, anti-Western enemies we cannot dissuade and with no shortage of regional crises we cannot discourage. Yet, the greatest military obstacles facing the United States are, and likely will remain, of our own making.

### **Fighting the War on Terror**

Peters argued that the United States does not understand how to fight the war on terror. We want a war without serious consequences for either side. But that is not war. Our enemies know it, even if we deny it. Our enemies are irrational in their goals, but practical in their techniques. We are idealistic in our goals and impractical in the limits we impose upon our own power. Only cataclysmic events are likely to wake us from our intellectual languor—we will not learn to make war consummately again until we have suffered disastrously.

We made mistakes in Operation Iraqi Freedom: we were too worried about their liking us. But the enemy we are facing lives back in the age of superstition. We did not convince the Iraqis that they were beaten. We do not understand their psychology of defeat. We need to cause more death and destruction. The people in the Sunni Triangle did not feel beaten [note: this shows the defect of a decapitation strategy: just taking out Saddam Hussein didn't remove opposition]. It is just like the Germans in World War I who did not know they were beaten. Victory means, "I win, you lose."

At the tactical level, it is speed that counts. We've ignored tactical speed. The challenge is to go faster. This was spelled out in Fallujah, which was a turning point in Arab and extremist perceptions. We no longer appear militarily invincible (and perception is virtually everything in the Middle East). The United States made a colossal strategic error in the course of a tactical engagement. Our unwillingness to finish the job in Fallujah, to cleanse the city of our enemies (and to live up to our public threats to do so), not only allowed the insurgents and terrorists to claim success, but gave them a palpable victory, no matter our insisting that we could have defeated them. We did not. From their perspective, they fought the U.S. military to a standstill. And they are correct.

Much has been written over the years of the need to operate inside the enemy's decision cycle. Except in the case of terrorists and other irregular forces, with their different operational clocks and calendars, we have become adept at this. But the real requirement today is to operate within the impact cycle of the media—and the brevity of this "global information cycle" will only tighten across

the next generation. The longer any encounter goes on, even at the lowest tactical levels, the more drag the media's need for sensational headlines will impose. The equation is straightforward: Lengthy military operations plus increased media scrutiny equals U.S. government internal friction, then entropy.

If we cannot win fast, we will lose. The next decades will only abbreviate the media-driven event-report-cognition-reaction cycle. Despite much progress on many fronts, our military still thinks at a 20th-century pace in tactical encounters. Meanwhile, the global media is defining 21st-century strategic speed.

### **Virtuous Destruction**

Peters argued that the United States' unwillingness to create a psychological atmosphere of defeat probably guarantees that its troops will have to remain on the scene for years—perhaps decades. America's military can afford the costs of war, but not the ever-rising costs of one flawed peace after another. First whittled down and now devoured by occupation duties, from South Korea (still) to Afghanistan and the Balkans, then on to Iraq, we have robbed our strategic reserve in order “to deploy sufficient babysitters with bayonets.”

How much physical destruction is required to bring a conflict to a decisive conclusion is unclear and varies by conflict. In particularly oppressive states, a thorough, graphic destruction of the military and security apparatus may suffice. When faced with hostile populations, far more destruction may be required to achieve our goals and insure that the achievement will last. Enemy populations must be broken down to an almost childlike state (the basic-training model) before being built up again. But war cannot be successfully waged—especially between civilizations, as is overwhelmingly the case at present—without inflicting memorable pain on the enemy.

## **Paper 3: Daniel Whiteneck, The Nuclear Weapons Environment in 2020**

Whiteneck put forth a methodology for understanding nuclear weapons in the international environment of 2020. The global system (political-military, economic, and social) will be shaped by six major trends that can be identified currently, and which will continue to evolve over the next decade to frame the choices states, organizations, and individuals will make. These trends are independent of the purposes of states, organizations, and individuals. They are the result of a global system that can be characterized as increasing in complexity and integration along political, economic, and social dimensions.

These trends have complementary and contradictory impacts as they evolve and interact across nations, cultures, and regions of the globe. These interactions may

result in different combinations of the trends to create distinct future global security environments. This is not to say that each outcome is equally likely, or that each outcome is a pure form of one of the three alternatives.

### **Alternative Futures**

Whiteneck said that it is possible to describe three alternative futures: cooperative, competitive, and chaotic. Then we can connect nuclear weapons to each future.

**The competitive future** is the least likely. The U.S. is keeping its Triad and we can target anything we want to. There is no new strategic thinking in this regard. We are keeping a reserve. In order to participate in the nuclear arena, rising powers will have to test weapons; if they test, we test. The nuclear taboo still exists. Multinational arms negotiations are hard and thus unlikely to be undertaken. In short, it would be hard for a new “peer competitor” to rise under this alternative.

**Chaos** is the next least likely future, especially one involving terrorists with nuclear weapons. The rogues have been eager to acquire nuclear weapons, but their numbers are shrinking [Iraq and Libya out of the game; Iran and North Korea continue in it]. The Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program is supposed to prevent nuclear weapons from reaching the open market. While terrorists have repeatedly talked about a WMD attack after the Aum Shinriyko attacks in the Tokyo subway, they have not been able to move decisively in that direction. They lack the capabilities and the state sponsor (required, so far, for a successful WMD program) since a state sponsor is unlikely to risk US retaliation.

What would be the tipping point? Local conflicts in the third world could lead to dramatic spillover effects with refugees, diseases, terrorism, and ethnic conflicts. Or, the global economic system may be disrupted by a breakdown of prevailing regimes in the financial sector, the trade sector, and the development sector. These chaotic events could be very disruptive to the system, but they are likely to take place at the individual level of violence and response, not at the strategic WMD level. That is, chaos is not conducive to the development of WMD.

**In the cooperative world**, we can go to lower levels of weapons. Proliferation has not gone as fast as we thought it would. Can we break the cycle? Libya, for example, has just given up the parts for 4,000 centrifuges.

### **The Role of Nuclear Weapons**

In each of the future security environments, the role of nuclear weapons and the structure of the U.S. nuclear arsenal would be markedly different, as would the rationale for U.S. positions on the size of the nuclear reserve stockpile, the



resumption of nuclear testing, and the public rationales for maintaining nuclear weapons.

**The competitive future**, with large nations and regional blocs jockeying for regional power in many global areas, would in some ways be the easiest for the U.S. to adapt to. Its nuclear arsenal might closely resemble its past and current structures. The U.S. would rely on a traditional triad to ensure survivability of its deterrent force against the robust nuclear forces of other nations with similar (but probably smaller) forces. It is possible that nuclear weapons would serve as a cautionary brake on direct great power confrontations in global and regional political disputes, as it did in the Cold War.

**If the global system moves toward a more chaotic future**, the U.S. might choose to make significant changes in all of these areas of its nuclear weapons policy and arsenal. Such a future could look back at the Nuclear Posture Review of the Bush Administration as the beginnings of a long-term change in U.S. nuclear forces, their potential use, and the rationale behind their maintenance and evolution. The new targets in this future would probably be the WMD-related facilities and unsophisticated delivery systems of rogue states. The small (and usually paranoid) leadership groups of those rogue states might also be directly targeted. In addition to these targets, leaders of terrorist groups, along with remote or difficult to access terrorist facilities, might be targeted if there were evidence of their developing WMD or of their planning of mass attacks—assuming the targets can be identified.

The U.S. nuclear forces required for missions in this environment would most likely be smaller in number (no need to compete with other large powers), with more emphasis on strike capabilities by (1) tactical aircraft delivering highly accurate low-yield weapons, (2) naval assets firing highly accurate low-yield cruise missiles, or (3) use of single warhead ICBMs (with no need for overflight access or bases).

**Finally, the cooperative evolution of the global system** presents the greatest dilemma for the maintenance of current nuclear force postures and the evolution of U.S. and allied nuclear forces in the future, since systems age, new ones may be required, and yet a benign global situation may pose difficult political decisions.

A largely cooperative evolution of the global system would put pressure on the U.S. to reduce its deployed nuclear weapons and the numbers maintained in reserve. If there are no big threats from other states and if the number of rogue states is declining and terrorist acts are local and do not disrupt the global system, then why keep a large number of weapons?. Similarly, why should the U.S. break the current regime embodied by a consensus adherence to the Comprehensive

Test Ban Treaty regime by developing new nuclear systems that require a resumption of testing? The argument would be that such testing would serve as a declaration of U.S. exceptionalism. Yet it would be an invitation to other states to resume testing and development of new systems, thus risking a new round of proliferation and increased tensions between regional rivals like India and Pakistan and China.

The U.S. arsenal would almost certainly be smaller in number. Fewer weapons would be deployed and they might be on lower levels of alert. A reserve stockpile would be maintained, but it would likely be at much lower numbers, as the time needed for any state to reconstitute its forces through testing and production would be long and as transparency increased among the major powers.

Whiteneck concluded by arguing that global trends are directing the world toward a more cooperative future—nobody new is building nuclear weapons now (except North Korea; and Iran may be nearing the capability) and rogue states can be deterred. While this is not a direct, conclusive projection from all of the trends, it is the most likely path for global politics in the next decade. The past ten years have indicated that disruptions to the world system threatened by proliferation can be contained by concerted action among the major powers.

The utility of nuclear weapons in a cooperative future lies not in their “use,” but in their role as insurer. A cooperative future does not mean the end of conflict, nor does it mean that international tensions will disappear. In such an environment, nuclear weapons possessed by the major powers have largely symbolic roles (signifying status) in relations among major powers.

## **Highlights from the Panel 3 Discussion**

### **The U.S. Force Structure in 2020**

The panel discussion began with a question about the U.S. force structure in 2020. One participant foresaw massive ground forces “equipped with bayonets.” One panelist argued that the forces will not be a lot different than they are today. He said the U.S. needs to establish a parallel course in Transformation: not just technology, but also cultural. He foresees marginal increases in the sizes of the Army and Marine Corps. The U.S. will maintain absolute dominance in the air and at sea. The Chief of Naval Operations sees a new course of warfare, centered on sea-basing. The Army and Marine Corps will converge in capabilities. The U.S. Air Force will be forced into increasing its strategic speed. The greatest change will be in close combat forces. Right now, the U.S. has only 70,000 infantry personnel because of the techno-centric evolution of U.S. forces. We achieved the first truly joint force in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

This last comment led to a comment by another panelist who argued that the U.S. should have dropped more bombs in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). We should have carpet-bombed Iraq. He contended further that we are entering the age of punitive expeditions. We should break the enemy and then go home. We do not need an army of significantly greater numbers, but we do need more infantry. Every soldier must be a rifleman. We should be able to conduct larger Ranger raids. We should break up the U.S. Air Force; it has failed. The Navy should take over space. We have too many bureaucrats.

### **The War on Terrorism**

One panelist asked what the model was for the war on terror. Is it police action? This led to a discussion on how the U.S. should prosecute the war on terrorism. One participant argued that the global war on terror is an offensive that we cannot win. We are up against the “promiscuous defenses of our enemies.” The All-Volunteer Force is dead [he may have meant that the prolonged Operation Iraqi Freedom will kill it]. We need interagency action. We need to get off war-fighting and into interagency action. How do you define the enemy and war now?

Another panelist noted that the active-reserve split is dead. We need professionals who will give long service and can be deployed for long periods. He argued that it is not a global war on terrorism, but a war against an organized enemy. We have to control the states that harbor terrorists.

Another panelist said that the war on terror is a deadly struggle, and is like the wars on crime and drug trafficking. We will do better against it since it is less rooted in human nature. The Europeans will shed more blood than we will. Occupations always fail.

### **Where is the Center of Gravity?**

One participant noted that, while Peters advocates a doctrine of decisive defeat, there’s an inverse relationship between casualties and the legitimacy of action. Is the center of gravity in the war on terror the population? How can we understand the cultural and social factors?

The panelists reacted to this question from two different angles. One argued that operations will be at the human, not technological, level of war, making it hard to train for. Another panelist noted that the U.S. has a history of adapting to the situation, and that we have to adapt in the war on terrorism by being willing to ratchet up the violence. Civilian casualties do hurt legitimacy, but the Germans did not face defeat in World War II until they took civilian casualties.

Several participants took exception to this argument. They said that this strategy is not working for the Israelis. We see an endless cycle of violence there. Why

should there be punitive expeditions? The panelist rejoined that every situation is unique. Israel is prosecuting its war on terrorism only halfway. One participant argued that neither the United States nor Israel is able to control the situation on the ground for the long term. In the end, the people themselves must do it. He noted that the Romans relied on locals to do their dirty work.

### **Iraq and the Future of Warfare**

Several participants complained that the panel had turned into a discussion on “how to do Iraq better.” They asked whether there will be any real changes by 2020? The whole discussion was how to do the ground war better. Aren’t there any new technologies that make a difference?

One panelist noted that the adaptive enemy will adapt faster than technology can catch up. The fog of war will still be with us and “he” will try to thicken it. The Air Force will become the operational maneuver force of this era. That is unprecedented.

Another panelist argued that Iraq has been an anomaly. He expects no more punitive expeditions. We should be buying cultural and language skills rather than F-22s. He would place his bet on behavioral controls out in the future.

## **Panel 4: Impact of Contemporary Conflict on Allied Strategic Policies**

This panel addressed what allies and friends may have learned from post-Cold War conflict and what they may do with what they have learned. European and a handful of other “western model” militaries have participated in conflicts throughout the course of the post-Cold war era as both a partner of the United States or in pursuit of their own national interests (e.g., India versus Pakistan, France and Great Britain in West Africa, Australia in East Timor, Israel and the Intifada). How has this influenced their thinking either as “emulators” of the US approach to war or from their own unique experiences?

### **Paper 1: Andrea Ellner, *The European Experience in Contemporary Conflict***

Ellner began her talk by posing the question “What is the European experience in contemporary conflict?” The lessons learned point to Europe undertaking operations that have international support. The EU perspective also weighs heavily in how Europe thinks about war.

The lesson learned from recent conflicts is that stabilization operations are the most difficult. As a consequence, this is where Europe, at least at the political level, prefers to place its emphasis. It also highlights a need for European forces to have staying power.

#### **Developing a Common Security Strategy**

The conflicts of the last decade have had a significant impact on the EU. They galvanized European thinking about their role in future conflict and highlighted the need for political/military/economic/administrative tools in the reconstruction phase. It was the critical reflection on their performance during the break-up of Yugoslavia that triggered the St. Malo process in 1998, where the UK and France took the lead in promoting a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), including the provision of military capabilities. The serious inner-European and transatlantic rift over the war on Iraq gave the EU’s approach to security another jolt. At the Thessaloniki meeting of the European Council in June 2003, documents were adopted outlining a European Security Strategy and addressing the issue of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The EU’s new security strategy has three central characteristics:

- First, the security strategy conceptualizes future security challenges as negative effects of globalization and is deeply wedded to the concepts of ‘human security’ and ‘global common goods,’ which must be protected or

enhanced through a mix of political, economic and, if necessary, military means (in line with the Petersberg Tasks).

- Second, since the EU has itself grown out of multilateral cooperation, both strategies strongly emphasize multilateral cooperation with and within international organizations, especially the UN, the WTO, or the IAEA, in conjunction with NATO and individual allies, especially the United States, but also Russia. Significantly, the transatlantic relationship is identified as a core element of the international system, which is not only in the EU's "bilateral interest but strengthens the international community as a whole."
- Third, the security strategy defines three concentric rings of concern: the EU area, its immediate neighborhood, and the wider world.

### **Future European Force**

Europe is wrestling with the gap between its aspirations and its capital to fund the military sphere. The UK and France are pushing military planning. The EU is developing a response force (50-60,000), which will be capable of deploying for 60 days at a time. The EU is committed to harmonizing force requirements among the member militaries by 2010. Procurement strategies will be drawn up with a common approach. Peacekeeping, humanitarian/disaster relief, and GWOT will be primary missions.

The simultaneous development of the NATO Response Force has raised questions of coordination. Many units would be double-hatted to both the EU and NATO response forces. NATO and EU are heading in the same direction. This is because Europe is feeling the bite of limited defense budgets. In addition, since the end of the Cold War, the trans-Atlantic link has weakened and European militaries fear a growing gap with the U.S. military. This is pushing Europe to adopt a more active strategy to engage where possible. It is also stressing the need for burden sharing.

The EU is beginning to push beyond Europe's boundaries. Azerbaijan has asked for EU assistance in bringing peace to its conflict with Armenia.

The EU's big challenge is taking over the SFOR (Stabilization Force) in Bosnia from NATO. The UK and France are pushing this. Similar force levels (about 7,000 troops) will be maintained.

### **European Lessons Learned for the United States**

The UK and France have many lessons learned to share. Past counter-insurgency operations have an impact on current and future thinking about peacekeeping operations. They possess experience in the back end of operations that can benefit the U.S. This could be the tie that binds the transatlantic alliance in terms of future conflict.

## **Paper 2: Stewart Woodman, *Operations in Asia's Near Abroad: What the Experience of Combat and Insurgency Means for the Future***

Woodman spoke on the Asian experience in contemporary conflict. Since the early 1990s, economic trends in Asia allowed for the expansion of military capabilities. Many thought that the region was on the doorstep of a new era of conventional, high technology warfare. The euphoria of post-Cold War security cooperation and proclamations of a 'new world order' had dimmed amid evidence of continuing arms acquisitions and recognition that jockeying for position among the major powers was likely to determine the future strategic landscape. Many countries endeavored to identify threats to justify ever-increasing force structures.

The financial crises of the late 1990s, as well as the realities of both conflict and force structure development have led to some retrenchment. Lower level insurgencies in many cases have replaced thinking in many countries about conventional capabilities, thus casting some significant limitations on the ability of smaller to middle-size Asia-Pacific nations to exploit more advanced defence capabilities effectively. Planning horizons are short. Equipment is acquired as individual platforms rather than based on a holistic view of deliverable military capability. The continuing primacy of the individual services means that joint planning, command and doctrine are frequently non-existent. Logistic support and maintenance are limited, affecting the ability to sustain operations, and training is constrained.

### **The Revolution in Military Affairs**

Few countries in Asia are able to conduct a Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA). Singapore can because it has a contained strategic environment and a good technological base. China has engaged in its own RMA, leveraging off lessons learned from observing U.S. operations since Desert Storm. It is still unclear whether they can achieve an RMA; the political commitment is questionable. Asian culture also places constraints on "thinking out of the box," something necessary to realize an RMA.

Many Asian countries have internal security concerns, which work against modernization of their militaries for external security.

Australia has benefited in its modernization efforts because of its ties to the U.S. It has been able to import advanced technology and conceptual thinking. The RMA, including such concepts as network-centric warfare, has increased Australia's situational awareness, including the transparency for understanding international developments.

Recent real-world experiences, however, have worked against Australia's modernization efforts. Work on the RMA in the early 1990s had drained resources Australia needed in the late 1990s to deal with current operations such

as those in the Solomon Islands, Indonesia, and East Timor. Operations such as those in East Timor have placed pressure on Australia to find solutions to current problems, such as deliverability, lift, and sustainability. This in turn has drained both funding and focus on the RMA.

Despite the impressive comprehensiveness of Australia's vision of network-centric warfare, there is no doubt that the gap between rhetoric and reality is growing. The commitments to preparedness and deployability for operations other than war are unlikely to abate in the immediate future. Not only are the fundamental causes of the instabilities deep-seated, but Australia's own domestic security and its regional leadership credentials could quickly be jeopardised by a failure to respond to the instabilities. The difficult choices will almost certainly fall to the detriment of capabilities at the higher end of the conflict.

### **Future Conflict and Force Planning**

Both recent combat experience and the drivers of strategic change in the Asia-Pacific thus point to a fundamental shift in the profile of future conflict. While most developing nations had lacked the resources and planning maturity to realize the technological ideal, the underlying objective was the development of a balanced conventional force for the external defense of the nation against external aggression. Significant asymmetric capabilities, particularly when linked to weapons of mass destruction, remained the province of the major powers and of rogue states largely ostracized from normal strategic interchange. Substantial force development, assuming appropriate warning indicators across a long timeframe, were generally considered to be the necessary preconditions for development of strategic power projection capabilities.

Most Asian countries are faced with a large agenda and few forces. Choices are critical for responding to the types of future conflict they anticipate. September 11 extended Australia's operational envelope. It has also increased its focus on the need for SOF-type forces and assets. The question remains as to what impact this will have on Australia's current operations and focus.

How to sort all this out? New Zealand reduced its force structure and focused on army support for crisis management. Indonesia has increased its focus on "operations other than organized war" and on homeland defense and has reduced its aspirations for expeditionary operations.

Australia's approach has been to consider alternative futures to drive Force 2020 (the future war fighting concept). This concept resembles the U.S. vision of multidimensional maneuver. We can't afford many forces. We need an adaptable force. The questions the military is dealing with include cost, use of reserves and civil support, tactical missile defense, and an increase in SOF. The army is already taking on SOF characteristics.



The shape of future conflict in the Asia-Pacific and how it evolves and within what timeframes will depend very much on the choices that middle powers make. On both the political and military sides, there is considerable inherent resistance to the emerging drivers of change, albeit sometimes as much from loyalty to the past as awareness of the potential pitfalls ahead. Yet, continued proliferation of asymmetric capabilities together with the growing power differential between nations (even within sub-regions) could dramatically change the strategic landscape within a relatively short timeframe. Should that occur, the core of the challenge for most nations will not be how to maximize control of the conventional battle-space, but how effectively they are able to come to terms with discontinuity in the spectrum of conflict.

### **Paper 3: Martin Van Creveld, *The Israeli Experience and Lessons for the Future***

Van Creveld talked about contemporary conflict versus Islamic terrorists. Everyone agrees that, 16 years from now (2020), the global war on terror will still be important. But terrorism is the weapon of the weak. It emerges in backward states. It seeks to make an impact via political, not military, means. Islamic terrorism is like any other terrorism. Its main success is political and in the use of the media. As some people say, “If it is not on TV, it didn’t happen.” This is a lesson Israel has learned in its long struggle with the Palestinians, a war that is far from resolution.

#### **The Israeli Experience and the War on Terrorism**

Van Creveld argued that despite their apparent weaknesses, terrorists, or terrorism, are not easily defeated by modern states. Israel has been fighting a backward enemy for decades in a conflict where it has had all the advantages:

- Israel controlled the ground.
- It knew the language and was familiar with Arab culture.
- It was very familiar with the terrain (unlike the U.S. in Iraq).
- The Palestinians were cut off from other countries; there were no open borders.
- Weapons were scarce for the Palestinians.
- Israel’s operations were often brilliant at the tactical and operational levels, especially for targeted killings. It takes precise planning to eliminate uncertainty.
- Israel could also understand the motives and vision of the other side very clearly.

All these advantages yielded meager results. In Lebanon from 1985 to 2000, Israel occupied only a small part of the land. Only 500 guerrillas opposed it. It cost only \$50-100 million a year, or only 1 percent of Israel’s defense budget. Despite these advantages, Israel withdrew its forces from Lebanon in a “left-

handed sort of victory,” which has not accomplished its goal of stopping the violence.

The other side can know there is such a thing as going too far. The Palestinians know that Israel can wipe them out or drive them into Jordan. But Israel has been forced out of Lebanon, has not eliminated terrorism in the Territories even though the operations have not been brutal, or at least not as brutal as the U.S. in Iraq. Seventy percent of Israelis want Israelis out of the Gaza Strip. Public opinion is defeated, as in the U.S. on Vietnam. Israel has not broken the will of the other side. At Israeli funerals, there is wailing. At Palestinian funerals, there are shouts for revenge.

Van Creveld holds a dim view of the future. He believes Israel cannot win this fight. Killing more people is not the answer. It might work in the beginning, but is not a long-term strategy. He does not believe Special Operations work. Israel uses heavy vehicles, e.g., old Soviet tanks reconfigured as APCs—the U.S. wishes it had them in Iraq. And, if Israel cannot succeed given all its advantages, what hope is there for the U.S. in Iraq? Many of the tactics the U.S. is now talking about (increased SOF-type operations, for example), Israel has been using for decades and it does not solve the ultimate problem.

### **Dr. Geoffrey Wawro -- Discussant**

Wawro noted that the EU's forces are quite conventional and quite militant, but its rhetoric is quite politically correct. Yet, even though its military strategy is “humanity-based,” the U.S. and Europe have similar threat assessments. Europe's real problem, however, is not political, but budgetary. Its military reforms are constrained by budgetary declines. Therefore, it is unlikely that Europe's commitment to reform will result in acquisitions in the foreseeable future.

In Asia, the dynamic is slightly different. In addition to wrestling with declining budgets, Asian militaries are also struggling with a delta between their immediate requirements and future operations (RMA), that is, between low-intensity conflict and technologically advanced systems.

A similar, yet distinct phenomenon is occurring in Israel, whose major problem is the Intifada. It is degrading their conventional training, leaving them vulnerable to possible war with their neighbors. Israel is of two minds with regard to future conflict: counter-insurgency vs. state-on-state conflict.

There is a growing gap between rhetoric and reality. It is hard to see actual progress. The question remains how to legitimize U.S. operations around the world. For Europe, it is hard to weigh in decisively on military reform when facing budgetary and social constraints on the use of military force. It is not necessarily a money issue, but one of attitudes about the use of military force. The U.S. treats the issue too easily, while the Europeans abhor the use of force.

While it is easy to criticize the allies, Wawro cautioned, the U.S. faces financial dilemmas as well. A defense budget of \$400-500 million a year compares to a budget deficit of about the same. And the U.S. is spending \$5 billion a month in Iraq. It faces jarring choices.

## **Highlights from the Panel 4 Discussion**

### **European Political Will**

The panel discussion began with a question about the level of will in European nations for military operations. Should Australia join NATO? Can NATO countries get rid of their old forces? One panelist argued that the UK is the primary supporter of the notion that Europe needs to commit, stay, and support the U.S. France and Italy will follow if their political masters sanction the operation. Spain is focusing on manpower. Other Europeans are a big question.

Another panelist noted that the Australian government was able to commit forces to Afghanistan because of September 11. It was harder for them to do so for Iraq because the rationale for the war was unclear. The big question for Australia will be whether the resources would be available to support a commitment of troops. Australia has many regional commitments. As one looks out to 2020, it is difficult to cover all bases. This creates the need to make choices. The RMA makes the force structure more flexible. But, they need a force that can contend with operations on both the high and low ends of the spectrum. He did not address the question about Australia joining NATO, but stated that the lack of an institutionalized security structure in Asia made it harder to develop the training and standards needed to operate in ad hoc coalitions.

### **Ad Hoc Coalitions and Waging Future Conflicts**

This comment prompted a question on how we can deter potential conflicts using ad hoc coalitions. One participant noted the rapidly rising costs of manpower and equipment, from which all countries suffer. This would support the need for permanent alliances.

The panelists agreed that, unfortunately, there is no easy answer. Countries have national requirements and still need to support allies. They will not be able to do it all the time. Any coalition needs to define the objectives of any potential conflict very clearly, including an exit strategy. It is critical to know your goals. Governments cannot build themselves into a corner from the start. Yet broad aims are hard to connect to practicalities.

## Fighting Terrorists

One participant drew a distinction between the Israeli experience of fighting the Intifada and the British experience in its insurgency struggles. The story in Northern Ireland was quite different because few people were killed on either side. 3,000 were killed there, including 1,700 civilians, 1,000 UK soldiers, and 300 terrorists. It took 30 years, but the IRA finally gave up. In Kenya, however, there were some similarities to the Israeli experience. The UK killed 17,000 people, and lost only 32 of its own—but lost the war. Far more insurgents normally are killed than counter-insurgents, but the war is won or lost based on winning the hearts and minds of the population. The German experience in Yugoslavia in World War II was similar to the U.S. experience in Iraq—the Germans thought it would be cheap and easy, but they were bogged down there, and it delayed their invasion of the Soviet Union, upon which winter caught up with them. As was said earlier, “Bad tactics have strategic consequences.”

A panelist added that the UK’s approach is to be proactive. It wants to make the military relevant in the short term across the conflict spectrum. It wants to avoid being reactionary. However, this is a cultural approach, and not easily transplanted to other countries.

Another participant argued that Israel had tremendous success in the 1950s and 1960s and through 1972, in preventing terrorist infiltration from Syria, Egypt, and Lebanon. Its defensive and intelligence measures were effective. It stopped 85 percent of attacks. What failed them was their brutality. They now have to station two divisions in the Gaza. The wall Israel is now building is an admission of failure.

A participant criticized British policies of the past, saying it had screwed up for 500 years, leaving the U.S. to pick up the pieces. He noted that because of U.S.-led operations in Iraq, five-six million Kurds are running things well in northern Iraq (he had just been there). The U.S. cannot walk away from them. He noted how the Europeans, particularly the Dutch, had screwed up in Bosnia. A panelist offered an eloquent defense of how humiliating the experience of Srebrenica had been. She said, “Don’t give up on Europe.” Another participant joined in, saying, “Do not give up on Israel, either.” If you abandon it, Israel may be forced to do things that no one wants. On Iraq, the U.S. should get out. The U.S. is going to get out anyway. The wall that Israel is building is a good thing.

## **Panel 5: What Might Other Countries Have Learned from Post-Cold War Conflict and How Might They Apply That Knowledge?**

While Panel 4 examined what friends and Allies learned from contemporary warfare and how that could impact the nature of war in 2020, this panel looked at the opposite side of the coin and attempted to assess warfare-related issues the United States and its friends and allies could face from enemies.

### **Paper 1: Anthony Cordesman, *Fighting the Islamists: What Have They Learned and How are They Likely to Apply it?***

The United States is so focused on the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan that it sometimes forgets that these two conflicts do not necessarily dominate how either regional military forces or the various extremists hostile to the U.S. and the West perceive the lessons of recent conflict. There is an equal tendency to forget the past and the influence of the military experience of regional wars and the experiences of other countries such as Israel. Far too often, the “Post-Cold War” era is perceived as a U.S.-centric revolution in military affairs when it is actually a much broader-based evolution in military affairs. This scarcely means, however, that the Afghan and Iraq Wars are not providing lessons to America’s current and potential enemies.

#### **Who’s the Enemy?**

Cordesman said that the enemies the United States and its allies are facing in the Middle East are diverse. Al Qaeda is only one of a set. We see a wider range of war, with our enemies pursuing a broader and better-articulated set of goals, over a long time. They have a longer history of war. They have learned to exploit our vulnerabilities. The more detail you learn, the more localized the problem. The more you generalize about the Middle East, the more you miss.

The terrorists’ war existed long before September 11, but it was mostly against other Arabs. Their war is highly ideological, and even eschatological. It is not a war for “outcomes.” They are capitalizing on failed secularism and massive population growth. These countries don’t want to become American-style democracies. The opponents of the local governments exploit this. So you cannot just kill insurgents, because they will just keep replicating themselves.

#### **Learning the Lessons of War**

Cordesman stressed that U.S. enemies in the Middle East need to be examined on different levels in terms of the lessons they are learning from contemporary

conflict. There are lessons learned by hostile states affecting their regular military or “conventional forces;” lessons learned by hostile states or movements regarding asymmetric warfare; and lessons learned by Islamist extremists and other hostile movements.

The U.S. has taught the region both military lessons, by its superior tactical performance in conventional warfare, and a far less advantageous set of lessons in regard to its capabilities for other forms of conflict. It has shown that it does not fully understand the extent to which it is involved in a broad political, psychological, and ideological conflict in the region. It has shown that it is inept in political, psychological, and information warfare, and self-deluding and ethnocentric in evaluating its own performance. It has shown that its advantages in defeating conventional forces do not extend to dispersed asymmetric warfare, and that it is currently vulnerable to strategic overstretch in trying to carry out “Phase IV” and stability operations in even one major contingency.

Where is the U.S. vulnerable despite the revolution in military affairs? It is vulnerable to sudden or surprise attacks. It has problems in taking casualties. It has problems in inflicting casualties, and it cannot fight low-intensity combat with infantry. Digital displays do not help. It is also vulnerable to hostage-taking and to external conflict (as in Lebanon and its long history). It is vulnerable to proxy warfare and false flags, and has been for a long time. It is a foreign power, alien in culture and religion. They know the Americans lack the language. U.S. information operations are inept and crude. Note, for instance, that the Bush speech at the Army War College (on May 24, 2004) was aired at 4 a.m. in Baghdad.

### **How Should the United States Respond?**

If the war is a political one, it should be fought at the political level. We are dealing with ideologies and martyrs who are predetermined to win according to their own dynamics, not lessons learned. Indeed, they “win by losing.” Al Qaeda considers that they were “not defeated” in Afghanistan and have moved to Pakistan. [Note how Saddam Hussein had declared that he had won in 1991]. They adapt by mutating, dispersing, fragmenting, and setting up new cells.

US military victories in political, ideological, and psychological conflicts can only be tactical at best. Unless the U.S. comes to understand that it is fighting a region-wide political, ideological, and psychological conflict, and adapts to fight this struggle on a continuing and much more realistic basis, it risks winning military engagements and losing the real battle. Unless the U.S. makes stability and nation building a goal and course of action from the first day of planning covering combat through to a true peace, its so-called revolution in military affairs will be a tactical triumph and a grand strategic failure.

As for tactical lessons, first, in psychological warfare, the U.S. needs to co-opt the media and get popular attention. They capitalize on the U.S. being anti-Arab and

pro-Israel. The U.S. needs to exploit the regional media, especially satellite TV. Radios have been around since the 1950s. Our enemies are not secular. They know how to push hot buttons. They use Americans as proxies. We will see more atrocities. They want to keep failed states failed—they're blowing up roads in Afghanistan. The long list of events in Iraq indicates a broad attempt to disrupt nation-building. They use mosques as sanctuaries. They want weapons of mass destruction, but as of yet, it is not clear that they can operationalize them.

What we've seen in Iraq are IEDs (improvised explosive devices), that their network is better than ours, the use of GPS, the use of towns and cities. They won in Fallujah (though the area around the city is not pacified). They use mountains and other geographical features. They use neighboring countries.

## **Paper 2: Zeev Maoz: *Fighting Organized Armies from Islamic States: What Have They Learned from the On-Going Conflict in Iraq?***

Maoz prefaced his talk by saying that much of what he would talk about was based on Cordesman's work. There is much more that we do not know than we do know. A lot is based on guesswork.

The revolution in military affairs is on exhibition more so in the Middle East than anywhere else. It is used for targeted killings. Israel used UAVs in Lebanon in the late 1980s. And both Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom were representative.

### **Types of Regional Militaries**

Among the militaries in the region, there are three types:

1. **The modernizing militaries:** Egypt, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia. They have tried to adopt the revolution in military affairs. They are close allies of the United States. The militaries in these countries are major legitimizers of the regimes, so they get funds. But the governments also fear the military as a source of instability. Both Turkey and Egypt have significant financial restraints, while Saudi Arabia does not. They still rely on platforms, not precision munitions. They have a high proportion of low-quality vehicles. They do not use space or other reconnaissance. We do not know how successful they may be in doctrinal adaptation—the human technology may not keep up with the physical technology.
2. **The traditional armies:** Syria, Iran, and Iraq. They are constrained. They have not changed very much over the last decade or so. All have financial problems. They get no more free Soviet credit. They are limited in precision-guided munitions and in their use of space. They are aware of

their widening gap with the U.S. and Israel, so they try to develop the poor man's weapons of mass destruction. They use North Korean No Dong missiles. Syria has chemical weapons, and we suspect they may have biological weapons, though there is no evidence of testing. Iran has an active nuclear weapons program.

3. **As for the non-state actors**, while there is enough sophisticated technology in Egypt, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, and while these are remarkably stable states, they face constant instability. There are radical movements in each country, which could inherit the sophisticated systems if they were to take over.

The Saudis spend \$22 billion a year on defense, or 11 percent of GDP, twice as much proportionately as Israel. The Egyptian government has been extraordinarily effective in squelching internal terror. They had the (cultural) assets the U.S. lacks—they penetrated the radicals' cells. The non-state actors haven't adapted in Egypt, but they can counter revolution-in-military-affairs technology. See the Hezbollah in Lebanon. Israel and the U.S. are vulnerable in their cumbersome, slow-moving vehicles. Israel tried to throw technology at the Hezbollah and the PLO, but it didn't work. HUMINT was more effective.

### **The Challenge**

The key challenge for the West in the Middle East is political, not technological. The PLO can control suicide bombings, but Israel destroyed the security structure of the PLO—a big mistake. The West needs to find local actors to do the dirty work.

### **Paper 3: Dave Finkelstein, *What has the PLA Learned, and How Might They Apply it in 2020?***

Finkelstein observed that the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) is currently engaged in a period of deliberate and focused reform that began in the early 1990s. The objective is to become a more professional force and a more operationally capable force. This in itself is not news. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 the PLA has undergone various intense periods during which it strove to achieve higher levels of modernization, enhanced operational capabilities, and increased levels of professional competence. What is new in this latest attempt is the larger domestic and international context against which military modernization is taking place—and it augurs well for the aspirations of the PLA.



## The Scope of PLA Development

The exact size, the precise organization, and—most importantly—the real (as opposed to aspirational) operational capabilities of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) in the year 2020 are impossible at this point to detail with precision. But there are six general characteristics about this constantly evolving defense establishment in the year 2020 that he was willing venture some guesses on:

- First, by 2020, the PLA (which is term that includes all of the services) will certainly be a more professional force in the corporate and institutional sense and a more operationally capable and sustainable military force in the war-fighting sense than it is today.
- Second, the PLA of 2020 will still likely be a force tooled for sustainable regional force projection (sustainability currently open to question); not global force projection.
- Third, the PLA of 2020 will still probably be a large organization in terms of numbers—larger than it needs to be or would prefer to be—with most units of uneven quality (in terms of equipment and trained personnel) but with a relatively small core of highly-trained and well-equipped units that will make the PLA one of the premier regional military forces in Asia.
- Fourth, although the PLA is today only at the incipient stages of its road toward joint-ness, by 2020 the “color” of the PLA will likely be much more “purple” than it is today. This implies more capabilities in the maritime and aerospace battle space dimensions and new command and control relationships.
- Fifth, by 2020 the PLA will almost certainly have enhanced space-based C4ISR capabilities—certainly with new architectures to enable new command and control relationships and probably for enhanced battle space awareness.
- Finally, while no nation's military modernization programs have static end-states, by 2020 the leadership of the PLA will aspire to have a military that is *credible enough* to deter outside military intervention in potential conflicts with regional adversaries on China's periphery and *capable enough* to fight and defeat other regional militaries there.

The PLA faces a host of problems and wild-card events, but it is a learning organization. Previous modernization attempts failed. But we have to ask how much real adaptive capability do they have on the ground vs. on the blackboard?

## **The PLA and the RMA**

Desert Storm had a galvanizing effect on the PLA, just as the 1973 war affected the United States. They instituted “the two transformations” in 1995. They were to metamorphose from local wars to “fighting and winning under modern high-tech conditions,” and from quantity to quality. They have made real across-the-board efforts on this, on a large scale.

They believe that a local war under high-tech conditions would involve limited objectives, stay local, be short and decisive, and would be conducted simultaneously in all dimensions. China has not fought a war for 20 years, but wars of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, some Chinese believe, will be sufficient to guide the PLA’s development.

## **Future Considerations and Contingencies**

Finkelstein noted that Taiwan is not the PLA’s sole contingency. They also worry about Japan, and they worry about India, whose navy has ambitions in the Indian Ocean. They also have a South China Sea contingency, based on exploitation of resources. China also has a residual distrust of Russia. It is worth noting that all these contingencies are maritime-centric and against highly-developed militaries.

The Chinese also worry about their economic center of gravity, which has moved from the interior in Mao’s time to the coast. Their economy is highly vulnerable to foreign forces. This makes the doctrine of the past, which conceded the coastline in the initial phase of a war, no longer viable.

## **Developing the Force**

The pillars of their modernization are new systems, new operational concepts, and institutional and system reforms. This, however, does not tell us how they will employ their forces. The institutional and doctrinal reforms are at the heart. They have issued new defense laws and regulations. They are more public about it. In the past, there were seven different PLAs (spread across the military regions). Today, there is a more homogenous force. Officer accession is no longer just from the ranks, but now also comes from the universities. They are providing scholarships at the universities. They are providing the officers with more training. Their officers’ tours are longer.

We see results from this. There has been a total reform of the military education system. The PLA has consolidated its services. They partner with the civilian universities on faculties. They are creating career non-commissioned officers (NCOs used to be just privates on extended tours). The PLA is now providing its officer corps 30-year careers, housing, and technical proficiencies. They are also reforming their commands, creating joint task forces, unlike the Soviet models

they used to follow. They would create war zones when needed. They are discovering logistics.

The jewel in the crown is doctrinal reform. It is the centerpiece of everything. They are rethinking the way they fight wars. The hardware will flow out of it. It is comparable to the Air-Land Battle doctrine of the U.S. Army in the 1970s, which was devised before the equipment to execute it was available. They want to fight short wars that are campaigns of paralysis.

## **Highlights from the Panel 5 Discussion**

### **Understanding the Middle Eastern Militaries**

The panel discussion began with several statements by participants and panelists. One participant noted that the U.S. has little understanding of the Middle East region and the forces that motivate the people there. The weapons in the region are obsolete. The non-state actors use information operations better than we do. But several of the states are stable.

Another participant rejoined that the militaries in the region are trying to modernize. Their spending and the systems they buy are predictable, but the variables lie in their cultures, which are less receptive to outside influence.

A panelist went further, arguing that the West sells weapons to Middle Eastern countries that they cannot absorb. We are down to two enemies, Syria and Iran, both of which have very poor militaries. There is no money for defense in either country. Syria has been inept in building weapons of mass destruction. There is a generation of rubbish that has been dumped on Iran. But they may be dangerous in WMD or in insurgent warfare (i.e., the classic middle of warfare is missing). This assumption was challenged by a participant who argued that the West has little insight into Syrian and Iranian strategic thinking. We do not know how they would use their weapons. Chemical warfare is highly ineffective against defended populations, but may be effective in a surprise attack.

### **The Chinese Experience**

One participant asked about the forces driving the PLA's development. Unlike the Middle East, a panelist argued, China's borders are secure. They have been exposed to the West. There's an upcoming generation of highly nationalist people who want the PLA to be great. But the PLA is stuck with lots of useless people. The real story in China in 2020 is whether the party will be able to keep the country together. There are lots of social changes. Any slowdown of the economy could lead to serious social instability.

The PLA has not shot in anger since 1979. The next time would be Taiwan—and for that, they would get just one chance.

Another participant asked whether Taiwan could defend itself. Are they likely to go nuclear? The panelist stated that the Taiwanese armed forces are an unknown quantity. More is known about the PLA. Political will is more important in Taiwan. As for going Taiwan nuclear, he could not comment.

### **Future of the Middle East**

Several participants wondered about the future of the Middle East. Several participants were curious about the creation sometime in the future of a great Islamic state. A panelist responded by asking, “What is Islamic Puritanism?” There is no consistency in what that is. It is very diverse. A Grand Caliphate is highly unlikely. Most states that have taken on an Islamic movement have won. The U.S. can’t lose, and in any case the Islamists can’t get it together. They could take over a single state [like they did in Afghanistan].

Another participant pointed out that Islam is more factionalized than any other religion. They have relative success in waging guerrilla warfare, but once big enemies disappear, they break apart. We have to make distinctions (presumably about where they come from).

When asked where the U.S. should go from here in the Middle East, one panelist noted that the hostility to the U.S. is growing in the Middle East. We need success in the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. We have to cease the absurdities with which we approached the Greater Middle East Initiative and Iraq. We need to help the states in the region, especially with their jobs and demographics. We should forget about “liberty” and all that.

There’s nothing dumber than the concept of “Phase IV/Stabilization.” We need to plan it before we get involved, as part of the war plan rather than just plan on defeating conventional forces.

## **Luncheon Speaker: David Spencer, Insurgencies in Latin America and What the Future Might Hold**

Spencer opened his remarks by noting that in the 1980s, there were 11 major wars in Latin America. In the 1990s, there were 5, of which only 1 was conventional. From 2000 to 2004, there was only one major conflict. Is this the most peaceful region in the world? The U.S. ignores the region, but the region may be in for another round of warfare.

### **Black Clouds on the Horizon**

Spencer said that the conditions are ripe in most of the Andean Ridge and Amazon Basin countries for the outbreak of political violence. Democracy was responsible for the reduction of conflict in the 1990s. But democracy has not produced the social and economic benefits promised. It did not cure corruption and patronage. It excludes minorities. It has bankrupted the countries, and now the populations are suffering malaise.

With democracy came economic liberalization, but it brought its own problems. There has not been much trickle-down. The gap between rich and poor has grown wider. Globalization has wreaked havoc on some of the economies. The combination of globalization and vast space has led to illegal economies, e.g., the drug trade. Drug money is pouring in. The money goes to many smaller boutique cartels, since the bigger cartels have been broken up.

### **Terrorists in the Region: Local and Imported**

Based on his sources throughout the region, Spencer contended that the region could be attractive to Islamic terrorists. This opened many provocative questions. Might they establish bases there? Would it drain U.S. resources to cope with them? Although much could be done right now with small resources, would the U.S. wait to react only when bad things happen?

The northern half of South America is now the most volatile part of the region. There, Colombia is the good news. Over the last six years, the Colombian government has written a national security strategy and has taken measures to establish security so that all their people can exercise their rights. The military has swept the contested areas and established local security. Uribe's popularity is at 80 percent. Former rebels can now form parties. The FARC has done a strategic withdrawal. They are suffering attrition. They may be waiting out Uribe, since a president's term in Colombia lasts only 4 years. The next election is in 2006. Will Uribe revise the constitution so he can run again? 70 percent of the population

wants that. The country has spent more on defense and has loans to repay. The economy grew by 3.4 percent in 2003.

The news is bad everywhere else:

- **In Venezuela**, Chavez is moving to a Castro-like position. He is a clever chess player and survivor. He now faces a referendum: those organizing it got 3.6 million signatures vice the 2.4 million required, but the authorities declared only 1.8 million valid. So Chavez might sidestep the referendum. A popular rebellion is the alternative. There is no big history of warfare in Venezuela. The high price of oil helps Chavez. Venezuela now chairs OPEC because they are grateful for his role.
- **Brazil** turned to the left with Lula. He was supposed to lift the poor, but there's not much money. Now he has offended everyone and the country is polarized. Low-intensity wars among the drug gangs are happening in the *favelas*. There may be 5,000 gangsters. The gangs have driven away the police. They are forging relations with the FARC and are getting more ideological.
- **In Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia**, their indigenous populations have found their voices and are conducting mass protests.
  - In Ecuador, they have brought down two governments. But there's no money. The FARC is deep into Ecuador.
  - In Peru, they have the most unpopular president ever—his rating is 6 percent, even if he is an Indian. Fujimori would win reelection if he were to return. The Sendero Luminoso is reviving. Are they supported by FARC?
  - The FARC is also active in Bolivia.

### **Implications for the United States**

In the worst-case scenario, the U.S. is facing the calm before the storm in Latin America. In the best case scenario, Latin American instability will play itself out in a series of low-grade controlled tremors, but will eventually emerge as stronger, with better governments and economies. Somewhere in between is the most likely outcome. To ensure a more positive outcome, it would behoove the U.S. to shake off its traditional complacency and be more pro-active in Latin America.

## **Highlights from Discussion**

### **Latin America and Terrorism**

Several participants asked about the foothold Islamic terrorists might have in Latin America. The panelist confessed that the picture is mixed. There is no question that there are people of Middle Eastern descent on the continent. The locals call them “Turcos.” There are a lot in the coastal areas and in the tri-border area. They tend to cluster. Most are in commerce, including smuggling. Hamas, Hezbollah, and al Qaeda have tapped into these underground activities. There is evidence of training bases. How serious it all is, is the question. They raise funds. They come there for rest and recreation. There are rumors of Muslim prayer rugs left on the Mexican border.

One participant asked whether there are connections between terrorists and drug money. Another participant chimed in that he was skeptical about al Qaeda being in Latin America. People use that claim to attract assistance. FARC has no ideology; no one takes them seriously. The panelist countered that the paramilitaries have ideologies, but FARC does not. Uribe thinks he’s the messiah. But we have to worry all the time about his survival.





## **Panel 6: What the U.S. has learned from contemporary conflict**

Since the end of the Cold War the United States has had experience with virtually everything in the spectrum of conflict, with the exception of great power conflict. Armed humanitarian intervention, terrorism, insurgency, redressing aggression, forcible regime change, attacks on the homeland, major state to state conflict, and forcible enforcement of UN sanctions have all taken place since 1989.

Starting with Panama in 1989, Special Operating Forces have, over the decade and a half, played an increasing role. This has apparently come about because of the nature of the conflicts themselves and the increased utility and lethality of Special Forces upon being mated by information networks to over-the-horizon firepower. This panel addressed the question: Will this trend continue?

### **Paper 1: Art Cebrowski, *Where is U.S. Transformation Headed and Will It Change the Character of War?***

Cebrowski began his talk by noting that our inability to predict the future does not mean that we know nothing about it, at least within reasonable bounds. Just as there are constants, so are there trends—growing ethnic and religious strife, the reshaping of nation-states, shifting and emerging economic centers, the escalating value of information and learning, the proliferation of information technologies in relatively undeveloped societies and nations, and the emergence of global, transnational terrorism. These trends and others are reshaping our government, our economy, and our society. Their scope and pace are transforming transformation—and the character of war.

New threats are emerging from societies and people who remain disconnected from the larger evolving global system. Great power war has been taken off the table, and we have become so proficient in conventional state-on-state conflict that the locus of violence has shifted to the level of the individual actor. This is a more nuanced threat—one defined by the vague, the inconsistent, and the irrational dimensions that we are still at a loss to measure. We are discovering that our forces must be rebalanced and realigned to the new strategic context. If the character of war were not changing, these realignments would not be necessary.

The challenges facing us do not merely require us to redefine the military piece of national security for an environment lacking a "traditional" battlefield threat. We must forge the broader internal and international security instruments necessary to support U.S. leadership in a world where accelerating change and increasing ambiguity are dominant features, and where threats can adapt and evolve more rapidly than we are transforming.

## **Defining the Transformation**

Transformation is past the tipping point [i.e., it has its own momentum now], given the unspecified crises ahead. But it is not enough to align to the power sources, which must then be aligned with the strategic need. The flows we should be concerned with include populations, finances, security, and resources.

The transformation started at the beginning of the Bush administration has itself been transformed. But we must move faster—increasingly, the pace of transformation is not one we set for ourselves. National defense is no longer just about the Department of Defense. Homeland defense is no longer an abstraction to the average American citizen, nor is it conducted solely at long range. This is no longer just about projecting power—rather, it is about exporting security.

Our view of strategic response has been altered. Responsive means reactive—that we have ceded initiative to an adversary and are prepared to act in the wake of an attack. The President’s National Security Strategy recognizes that the consequences of a potential WMD attack mandate that we be preventative. This is a different approach reflecting a different role for defense in national security and a need for different capabilities. For example, if we are going to be preventative rather than just punitive, a change in intelligence capabilities is indicated. Clearly, we have to know more sooner. We must acquire the ability to better identify and understand potential adversaries. This calls for different organizations, different systems, and different ways of sharing intelligence. We need the ability to look, to understand, and to operate deeply within the fault lines of societies where, increasingly, we find the frontiers of national security.

Security policy puts restraints on the future since it is on networks and requires strategic teaming. Social intelligence is now dominating military intelligence. The peer competitor is off the table. The Department of Defense looks like the Digital Equipment Company: they had the finest computers in the world, but there was no market for them.

There is a great deal of hedging on China’s (growing? great?) capabilities. We need to turn China into a useful ally. Hedging against great powers is no longer the organizing principle.

Organizational forms can govern competition. The hierarchical still dominates organizational forms. But it is changing. We are creating larger teams of smaller entities—call them “hyperarchies.” Hierarchies now have to coexist with powerful networks. Thus we have a rich reach of relationships (as for air and ground in OIF). The distinction between supported and supporting has been blurred.

We get down to the technological level after we have gone through all the cultural issues above. Behavior is important. This does not mean we walk away from technology; we need it. For example, sea-basing will not just be a base at sea. Massive ships are not the answer, especially as they could be prime targets. But we should have 25-30 of these ships. The Army and Air Force have to go in smaller units to align with the strategic environment.

### **Designing the Future Force**

There used to be some general agreements about the capabilities needed in our forces. These addressed where we should deploy military forces, the method of deploying and using those forces, their general structure and how we should organize them, and the kinds of technology they should possess. These capabilities have been dashed on the hard shoals of reality. The scope and the pace of geo-political change compel us to create organizations and doctrine that can readily adapt and retain flexibility within increasingly complicated operating domains. Increasingly, whether in business or war, adaptivity equates to effectiveness and survival. The nation's military force must be an adaptive instrument of national power.

There are two ways of deciding what U.S. forces ought to be:

- One is inductive, an approach that looks for weaknesses, gaps, deficiencies, and problems, and determines how to correct them. This is the way Pentagon planners went about designing U.S. military forces for over half a century. Over time, however, our force planning process took on the patterns and predictability of the threat it sought to counter.
- As the alternative, the most significant shift in our approach to force planning is the rise of deductive thinking and capabilities-based planning. Capabilities-based planning provides a framework for understanding some of the persistent and emerging challenges before us. Part of capabilities-based planning is a conscious search for the unexpected, the deviations from the usual, and the bounds of feasibility. This is an indicator of the direction of future force capabilities.

Increasingly, new capabilities that address only traditional threats will simply be moved off the table. Now we expect to justify systems based on their capabilities against irregular or catastrophic challenges. We have yet to see this justification used for many of the largest and most expensive programs in the Department.

Can we really pay for this force? We have only a budget strategy, not a cost strategy. We should not be paying more for decreasing returns.

The need to transform the role of defense in national security and the organizations and processes that control, support, and sustain it cannot be ignored. Transformation seeks to create our future, and to shape that future for a greater good, not simply fall victim to other inertias on the global stage. However, transformation begins and ends with culture. Transformation is first and foremost about changing culture. Culture is about behavior—about people—their attitudes, their values, their behaviors, and their beliefs.

## **Paper 2: Michael O’Hanlon, *Trying Not to Repeat the Past, Bad Lessons that are Hopefully Learned***

O’Hanlon began his talk by pointing out that a hallmark of the U.S. military has been its willingness always to learn from its mistakes and always to improve. Lessons learned are based on failures. In 1993 (in Somalia), we learned not to take our eye off a small operation. In Desert Storm, we learned to give PGMs to all aircraft. This lesson was relearned in Kosovo. We fix problems.

But what about the mess in Iraq? Why were we not prepared? It is hard to understand. Our system was incompetent. We knew too much to get it so wrong. We were not ready to do stabilization. The State Department and every think tank said it would be hard (but were ignored).

The primary lesson not yet learned by the U.S. defense establishment in recent times, and resulting from failure on the battlefield, concerns the poor planning and preparation for the post-Saddam period in Iraq. The reason for this mainly lies in the civilian meddling in the planning process. In the ongoing debate over the proper roles of uniformed personnel and their constitutionally superior civilian bosses in American national security decision-making, it is probably now time for a correction in favor of an enhanced role for the military voice.

### **Explanations for the U.S. Failures in Iraq**

The standard explanation for the failures in Iraq, O’Hanlon noted, is that the Rumsfeld/Wolfowitz/Cheney vision of modern warfare, as well as their strong preconceptions about how easy it would be to depose Saddam, deserve the blame for CENTCOM’s lack of readiness to handle the challenges that began to present themselves in Iraq on April 9, 2003, when Saddam’s statue fell in Baghdad. This perspective is mostly right. It is also too simple.

The fact is, we had a pretty good invasion strategy—to take out the leadership without destroying the country. But, there was no recognition in the process that Iraq’s security institutions might be shattered and thus responsibility for maintaining civil order would fall to American-led forces. Any one individual

might not have thought of it, but a system is supposedly in place to make sure that this phase of military operations is addressed.

Previous CENTCOM plans for overthrowing Saddam gave full attention to this issue. However, the military let itself play a subservient role and bought into the notion that the entire operation would be “a cakewalk.” O’Hanlon argued that the military was hewing to the lesson Eliot Cohen advanced in his book, that the civilians lead best in strategic matters. But strategy is too important to be left to the civilians. The military was talked out of (their best judgments). Only Shinseki objected. The rest agreed with the civilians. They said they were “comfortable” with the plan. They swallowed their objections.

### **The Military’s Proper Role**

If there is still any doubt about whether military officers should be shy about entering into national debates on matters of strategy and the use of force, a quick review of two other crises may help solidify the point.

In Kosovo, General Wesley Clark said, “We’re losing,” and got the civilians’ attention. Livid with Clark’s unsanctioned planning activities for escalation up to and including a possible ground war, Secretary of Defense William Cohen fought Clark at every bureaucratic turn and ultimately relieved him of command early. But Clark was right, putting the nation’s need to win its wars ahead of standard decorum.

The uniformed military did not do as well in recent times. Had General Franks or General Myers acted similarly when the Iraq war plan was devised, the country would have been better served. Instead, there was no clear line between strategy and tactics. Tactics have strategic consequences. That means the politicians have to be involved. But if the tactics are flawed, then the strategy will be flawed (i.e., the military should point that out about the tactics). Some of the military should have complained or even resigned. The standard answer in the Pentagon was that they were concerned with humanitarian relief, refugees, etc., upon their conquering Iraq. The plan stopped on April 9.

### **Paper 3: Steve Metz, *Fighting Insurgent Campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq: Are there New Characteristics or will Old Verities Still be the Rule in 2020?***

Insurgency has existed as long as the powerful have frustrated the weak to the point of violence. It is simply a strategy of desperation in which those with no other options turn to protracted, asymmetric violence, psychological warfare, and political mobilization. In some modes, insurgents seek to attain their objectives directly by wearing down the dominant power. In other forms, asymmetric

methods are used to rectify an adverse conventional military balance. Ultimate victory would come through conventional means once parity or something like it were attained. Ultimately, though, the result is the same: the weak avoid defeat and, over time, the power balance changes and they become stronger.

While insurgencies have been with us a long time, their strategic significance has vacillated. They were in the background to great power conflict. They take on increasing significance today because great power conflict is such a low possibility. The war by the terrorists is the first global insurgency.

To understand the insurgencies the United States now faces, whether those in Iraq and Afghanistan or the global one against violent radical Islam, and to develop coherent strategies to counter them, American planners and leaders must ask two questions: Do these insurgencies exhibit the characteristics that have traditionally led to insurgent success or victory? And do these insurgencies have any characteristics that break with traditional patterns and that may allow them to attain success or victory even though they are missing some of the traditional determinants of success?

### **Learning the Lessons of the Past**

We learned counterinsurgency, and then forgot it, many times. We were forced into it, and then let our ability atrophy. It is a phoenix, continually rising from the ashes. The thirst for knowledge of counterinsurgency is urgent now. It is being discussed in messages, war games, etc. Is what we learned 10 years ago still useful?

There has been too much focus on reorganization, especially of the Army. That includes civil affairs people, military police, light infantry, etc. But those are not key. Instead, we suffer from strategic and conceptual incoherence. For instance, in the two current insurgencies, we have clashing approaches:

- One comes from Malaya and involves ameliorating the root causes. We seek to fundamentally transform the society and economy from which the insurgency arises. Most important is the psychological aspect.
- The other comes from the military side and particularly reflects Israeli thinking. It and is aimed at limiting eliminating the threat. One can point to the Marine Corps in Fallujah, and how they went out thinking they would operate with velvet gloves but ended up exercising the mailed fist.

So old ideas need updating. They are not working. We need to make rapid improvements at counterinsurgency—which is a holistic strategy focusing on the psychological and political dimension—rather than simply combating guerrillas. We are not creating the civil sector and thus we're ending up with a serious

means-end mismatch. We want victory in the global war on terrorism, but we have a strategy of only managing it.

### **The Way Ahead**

At the tactical level, there are only minimal differences between this insurgency era and the previous one. While the U.S. military has allowed its ability at counterinsurgency to atrophy, it can easily rebuild it. The basic soldier skills and professionalism that exist throughout the military provide a solid foundation. Developing counterinsurgency capabilities in the other components of the U.S. government, which is as vital to success as augmenting the military's ability, will be more difficult, but not impossible. In general, the Department of Defense is aware of what needs to be done at the tactical level and is making improvements. The real challenges are at the strategic level, in understanding where insurgency fits into American strategy and how the strategy of insurgency has evolved. Ultimately, insurgency is a strategy, not a tactic.

Ironically, even though the world has entered a new era of strategic significance for insurgency, no model or strategy of insurgency that is as effective as Maoist People's War has emerged. Neither Iraq nor Afghanistan is likely to produce one. The jury is still out on the global counter-insurgency against radical Islam. Ultimately, then, today's insurgency is basically an attempt to add a few new twists to old methods. While it is hard to kill, it is unlikely to generate a new wave of insurgent victories.

### **Paper 4: Steve Biddle, *The Growing Role of Special Operations Forces: Will SOF Operations Become the Predominant Characteristic of the American way of War in 2020?***

American Special Operations Forces (SOF) have scored some extraordinary achievements in recent warfare. SOF have thus become an increasingly central element of American military power. Their growing utility is in turn attracting an increase in the personnel and resources devoted to special operations.

But how far should this trend be taken, and how prominent should SOF's role become? Are there natural limits on the roles and missions suitable for special operations, and if so, what are they? Is a modest expansion of special operations at the margins of an essentially conventional military the best approach? Or should the conventional military eventually be transformed around SOF? Should special operations come to provide the predominant ground element in a radically restructured American military?

## **Realigning the U.S. Force**

The proposals for realignment include the Afghan model of special forces-plus-PGMs-plus local forces. This happened in Kurdistan, too. The proposal argues that war based on the combination of SOF and standoff precision will enable America to wage major combat operations without mass conventional ground forces of our own. If so, this would imply a dramatic shift in the relative importance of SOF and the conventional military in American force structure, and would certainly constitute revolutionary, rather than merely evolutionary, change.

It limits U.S. casualties. It may be widely applicable. It could lead to a major realignment from conventional to special forces-plus-airpower.

But if one examines the Afghanistan model, there are hidden problems. The operations in Afghanistan were heavily based on precise engagement. PGMs were sufficient against unskilled enemies, i.e., the Taliban. The Taliban committed numerous mistakes, especially by exposing themselves. But then we encountered better-skilled opponents, who could conceal themselves against PGMs. It took ground forces to get them. The operation at Bai Beche on November 5, 2001 is such an example. We could not give precise target coordinates to the aircraft, so we carpet-bombed. At Tora Bora, there was insufficient ground exploitation of PGM strikes.

At Operation Anaconda in March 2002, an intensive pre-battle reconnaissance effort focused every available surveillance and target acquisition system on a tiny, ten-by-ten kilometer battlefield. Yet fewer than 50 percent of all the al Qaeda positions ultimately identified on this battlefield were discovered prior to ground contact. The result was extensive close combat. Most of the operation took the form of a series of close assaults to destroy surviving, actively resisting defenses whose locations were mostly unknown prior to their firing upon friendly forces, often at very close quarters.

For OIF, the Afghan model applied only in the north, and against unskilled opponents. It did not work against skilled opponents. The Republican Guard units were “semi-skilled.” The regular army conscripts were unskilled. They set up in visible positions, e.g., along ridgelines. We did not get exposure to a skilled opponent.

## **The Way Ahead**

For the future, do we need better technology for the Afghan model or better skills? And what do we do against complex terrain? If we do not solve these questions, special forces are insufficient. If we can do the target acquisition, we do not need special forces. So the Afghan model does not drive us to more special forces.



The ultimate limiter here is SOF's ability to take over missions now primarily assigned to conventional forces—and especially, its ability to shoulder the mission that now drives much of the conventional ground forces' structure: major combat operations (MCO). SOF's role could certainly expand within the framework of traditionally SOF-specific missions such as unconventional warfare or counter-terrorist direct action, but such tasks are unlikely to become the central drivers of American force structure any time soon. Expansion within the framework of such missions is thus likely to be incremental rather than radical. The limiting constraint on SOF's predominance in the American military is its ability to supplant conventional forces in one or more of their traditional roles.

Though it may well make sense to incrementally expand the role and size of special operations forces, it thus does not appear that the Afghan Model, at least, offers a viable opportunity for radical restructuring by 2020. Change is surely needed, but so is continuity. And the actual experience of Afghanistan and Iraq suggests that the need for continuity may be greater than some now expect, the scale of the changes needed may be more evolutionary, and the prospects for revolutionary change may be more limited.

### **Tom Keaney—Discussant**

Keaney noted that the panel did not raise technology as the silver bullet, as some might have expected from such panelists as Art Cebrowski. Instead, all of the panelists focused on the importance of the cultural, human, and teaming aspects—and the organizational.

The role of civil-military relations in the conduct of warfare has been highlighted in the most recent operations. The operations described are the most political of all warfare, but the military still saw themselves in the military role. An important question for the future will be how the military makes its voice heard to policymakers. Should they be more public or should they try to influence the civilians privately?

This question is illuminated by the fact that the war on terrorism is not fought in black and white terms. The fundamental question of whether to fight the insurgents or fight the insurgency is colored by the civil-military question.

The final issue raised by the panel was the future of the U.S. military force. Should the special forces morph into something different, more towards conventional capabilities, like the Marine Corps?

## Highlights from the Panel 6 Discussion

### The Mistakes in Iraq

Most of the panel discussion was devoted to Iraq and the mistakes that were made. One participant asked: Why didn't we think through the post-war situation? How can we fix that? A panelist noted that the military has a tendency to confuse war and combat with shooting. They emphasized the strike-reconnaissance complex and drew down the Army. This is a narrow view of warfare. Our military leaders grew out of the Cold War with the Soviets. They think only of Phase I, not Phase IV.

Another panelist argued that most of the military underestimated what would happen, but the civilians browbeat the military into doing what they otherwise thought was wrong. What to do? Resignations? The media loves those. Leaking? Powell has been a master at that. The Army has not hesitated to leak its readiness C-ratings, but on other things it does not.

Several participants wondered how we could mitigate the enemy's cost-imposing strategy. Will enemies lure us into increased costs? We do the German mailed fist, not the British velvet glove. In the end, we walk away. It is our pattern. Why even debate it? One panelist argued that we have to be prepared to pay. War is expensive. But we should not make it so expensive that we self-deter. We should have done Monrovia. We buy many expensive options that are of no use. Another panelist lobbied for a strategy of management. We need to keep intervening, as we have in Haiti. We do it in the global war on terror. We are heading that way on Afghanistan. There is still dissonance on Iraq: we have not mobilized the resources.

A participant argued that we should look closely at the Zinni plan. All the strategic documents [NSS, etc.] were useless for Iraq. On the interagency conflict, it was not enough for Powell and Armitage to be right. State and AID don't know how to do nation-building. USIA does not exist anymore. Look at the education of the civilian side, not just at the Department of Defense.

A civil affairs officer in the audience reminded everyone that Powell said we would not do nation-building. He could not have said that we would be there (in Iraq) for 7 to 10 years without making the administration vulnerable to criticism of mission creep. State was absent from the debate. But the military was absent, too. They have just a war-fighting doctrine. They do not talk about or ever plan for nation-building. Bosnia and Kosovo were too hard—they did not want to do it. We went into Iraq with a notion of rotating the troops. And we left the non-combat forces vulnerable.

Several participants argued that the military is good at the brute-force approach. They figure they need a certain number of troops in proportion to the population. But Rumsfeld wanted only the head of the serpent. We needed a hybrid model, including saving the Iraqi security apparatus.

### **Planning for 2020**

One participant reminded the audience that the conference was about warfare in 2020, not just about Iraq. A panelist came back to an earlier theme, noting that the people who do our strategy should grapple with the question of fighting insurgents vs. fighting the insurgency if we are to look out to 2020. Is Iraq to be the norm? Does it mean we intervene all by ourselves? Or is Bosnia the model for the future? Another participant pointed out that there are alternative futures. We can either go it alone, or hope for a Pax Americana without the Americana.

A panelist concluded the discussion by returning to Iraq. The preemption strategy should have discriminated on time and place, but it did not. There are a large number of states to which the Westphalian rules still apply. The invasion of Iraq was a strategic masterstroke—right into the middle of “The Gap,” the dysfunctional area. It is too early to say it is a disaster. The big failure would be backing off and never intervening again.



## Concluding Session

In the concluding session, a panel of experts reflected and commented on the conference and attempted to integrate the various threads of discussion into some overarching judgments.

### Harlan Ullman

We have to start moving toward 2020 now, on a bipartisan basis. He laid out ten steps in his new book, but chose to highlight five on this occasion. He stated up front that his current vision was pessimistic.

1. On governance, is the U.S. system designed in the 18th century appropriate for the 21st? Politics has become all campaigning, no governing.
2. On ideology and culture, are we really learning about these?
3. On demographic realities, our productivity has soared, but we have accumulated vast liabilities. The international banking system is fragile. The situation is very unpredictable. We may not see super growth.
4. On the threat, this administration doesn't understand it. The threat is ideological and religious. There are 1.3 billion Muslims. It's equivalent to Lenin's threat—Hitler's, too.
5. On the basic strategic paradigm, we relied on assured destruction during the Cold War. The likelihood of nuclear war was low. Now we face mass disruption by terror. We will see more Madrids. Our way of life will be impinged upon.

Governance in the U.S. is not working. We need a radical reorganization of Congress. It should meet regularly with the NSC. Maybe the NSC should meet regularly, too. [But would it all make any difference? Congress faces the 8 vs. 535 problem: you either involve only the 8 leaders, or all 535. There is nothing in between.]

We should change the National Security Act. The Department of Defense has become too much the surrogate for actions other agencies should be taking. There is no overall government effort [e.g., for Iraq]. We should expand the war colleges' student bodies to include all agencies.

The world may be as dangerous as it has ever been. Islamic jihadism's ambition is to set up its own state with Saudi money and Pakistani nuclear weapons. We are not safe.

## Paul Van Riper

The idea that there can be revolutions in military affairs is nonsense. Change in modern military organizations is evolutionary by necessity if for no other reason than the inability to recapitalize weapons systems in less than several decades.

There have been four previous periods of significant military change in U.S. History—1865-1914, 1918-1940, 1945-1965, and 1975-1990. Only in the last period did the U.S. get things right—and that was largely because we focused on operational concepts vice technology. We are apparently in a new period of significant change, one that began in 1992. Unfortunately, little more than slogans based on unproven assertions have been produced. Those offering new ideas appear to have little real understanding of the true nature of war—that combat is an inherently chaotic and uncertain phenomenon. There are opportunity costs in pursuing baseless assertions and slogans, the most important being that of missing the opportunity to determine how we want joint forces to fight in the future.

All of this means we need to *think* our way through the problem of future war, not *buy* our way to a solution. In short we need to:

- Go from concept to organization to technology, rather than the reverse.
- Approach war holistically and systemically, not systematically. War does not lend itself to the scientific method, which demands reduction or deconstruction of problems—war is a nonlinear phenomenon.
- Stop thinking in terms of major combat operations and stability operations. Suggesting that we create separate forces for the “front end” and “back end” of war is wrong.

In addition all services and the joint community should consider the following as they work to adapt to future needs:

- Western states’ social-political attitudes toward war effectively foreclose many desirable operational choices—militaries will be forced to pursue alternative defeat mechanisms that don’t overly offend societies’ scruples.
- Less killing and less destruction means less shock to enemy systems—they may not feel defeated. Physical dislocation will have less meaning.
- New enemies will be far less “templatable,” meaning detection will not equal diagnosis.

- Though situational awareness enables economy of force in conventional operations, it is only at the operational level, not the tactical.
- Increased precision begets diffusion and even disappearance as well as masking of targets (it may drive an enemy to unconventional or insurgent-like tactics). Also density of forces is likely to be lower in conventional operations.
- Battlespace will be expanded in time and space, meaning more concurrent and parallel activities (many not sequential) over greater distances (actions compressed).
- The big issue will be how to deal with unconventional operations:
  - We have a well-developed theory for conventional operations and the accompanying doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures. We have none of these for unconventional, irregular, guerrilla, insurgent, terrorist conflicts.
  - The utility of current terminology—lines of operations, decisive points, main and supporting attacks—may not suffice.
  - Manipulation may supplant maneuver.
  - Special operations skills will be more valued.
  - Faster decision cycles—that is, speed of action being as important as speed of decision-making—means that mission-type orders (task with associated intent) will be even more important.

Ultimately, however, we must improve how we bring all the elements of national power to bear against our Nation's enemies. We need to develop a theory of conflict.

## **Tom Keaney**

We should look backwards in ten-year increments: 1994, 1984, 1974, 1964. We can see that we cannot get it right. We will be wrong. Now we are obsessed with Iraq and the global war on terror. Will we still be in 2014?

How has the subjective nature of combat changed? How much of society is involved? How much of the whole government is involved? We have real trouble with the global context; we tend to just look at regions. We worry about:

- States: Korea and Pakistan.
- Energy, water, food as the possible sources of war.

- Religion-based terror.
- Latin America

What is combat? We need absolute speed at the tactical level. Should we think about attrition? Should we merge the Special Forces into the U.S. Army and Marine Corps? Should we leave air, space, and naval forces to cover Northeast Asia? We are doing little on technology since we became obsessed with Iraq. How would it drive the future? High-end combat will involve smaller forces, in smaller segments.

We have to look at interagency combinations. These include combat/non-combat, first half/second half, AID or some better agency, air power vs. ground power. There is something there that relates to the first half/second half. The second half is on the ground—but it's also more interagency.

### **Jim Blaker**

He has seen an extraordinary conference. But it did not talk much about 2020. We talked a lot about the present. The future grows out of the present. But we did not talk much about shaping the future, or avoiding futures.

He heard several dichotomies: optimistic vs. pessimistic, blue sky vs. present, technologists vs. Cassandras, ISR vs. HUMINT, network- and effects-based operations vs. attrition, Iraq as the beginning of strategic victory vs. strategic debacle. What comes out of it all is a non-triumphant tone.

Who could portray the situation in Iraq in worse terms? It is a serious debate, one that we have not had since after Vietnam. We could understand the Vietnam debate. We asked, "What happened in Vietnam? Why the screw-up?" Lots of people were killed. But now it is members of the All-Volunteer Force that are killed, so it is not a national problem like it was with Vietnam.

Is there now a sensitivity to what's going on? Maybe what will happen is a debate like that which took place post-Vietnam, to get it right. Why? The American spirit is driven by pragmatism and a belief in the future. We are cognizant of the errors, but he did not hear many solutions offered at this conference.

### **Paulette Risher**

How do we think about thinking?

The focus on Iraq is not bad. We look at it through a broken lens. It may work out.



Transformation is not just about technology. People are more important. We need social intelligence and a transformation in that area instilled at very junior levels. The “Red Team” is driving our thinking, as was noted by General Scales. We are reactive. We dominate the middle of the spectrum, so our enemies go to the right or the left (to WMD or to terror/insurgency). We invest, they react. We work on the problems we want to solve, not on what an enemy drives us toward. There is a shorter decision cycle. We do not analyze what they do. We need to look at teaching ourselves *how* to think vs. *what* to think.

She noted the dichotomy between Tom Barnett’s optimistic view of the world vs. Ralph Peters’ pessimistic view. We need to expand our thinking beyond our normal comfort zones. We are doing things right at the level of our people and their families, even if we have problems at the grand strategic level.

## **Highlights from the Wrap-Up Panel Discussion**

### **The Israel Experience**

The moderator of the panel opened the discussion by stating that the most troubling to him was Martin Van Creveld’s remarks about how Israel was coping with terrorism. Israel had all the advantages (including knowing the language), but is no closer to victory today. Israel is in a better position than the United States with regard to the enemy it is facing, but has not solved the problem. This feeling was echoed by a participant, who noted that the tragedy is that so many people are doing the right thing, but it is not working. A panelist argued that the Israelis are fighting the insurgents, not the reasons for the insurgency. They need to understand the basis for the insurgents’ actions.

One panelist argued that we have been dealing with the symptoms, not the causes. The causes are political third rails. We have to get to the Israeli-Palestinian problem, and then India-Pakistan and the madrassahs. We need to take on the Saudis. These problems are term-killers for presidents.

One participant noted that France in 1954 was all about Algeria and Vietnam. France was defeated in Vietnam and DeGaulle got out of Algeria and so France had no more colonies. So how do we look forward to 2020 and whether Iraq and the global war on terror will still be with us at that time? How does the U.S. handle its empire? We are losing our edge. The funds to manage this empire are not unlimited. We should scale back and take on only 2-3 priorities, including Pakistan. We should pursue evolutionary change, not a grand design. And we should be a leader, attracting allies, not repelling them.

A panelist challenged the premise of this argument, stating that we should not use the lessons of the past. What are the really big changes in the world? The French

understood that colonialism was over. Is what Tom Barnett said true? If so, it changes how we look at leadership.

Several participants argued that we need a theory of conflict for the current environment. There is a competition of ideas, violence, and logic. All elements of national power need to be brought to bear. This means the information element becomes dominant—in the war of ideas. It is so contradictory that it will take a long time to sort out. It is not a competition of nation-states or rational actors pursuing national interests.

We can look at the Israeli Defense Force's experience in the late 1990s and how it might project to 2020. First, the IDF mapped out the challenges in a relatively well-defined strategic environment. The main challenge was uncertainty. There were wide variations in the views of the challenges, from WMD threats to internal unrest in Israel itself.

We have to ask whether we have the human and intellectual capabilities to meet these kinds of challenges. We have to understand the resources within the United States. Staying power is the key challenge. September 11 raised the need for staying power. Small incidents build up to a big strike. Life goes on in Israel, but the economy is in deep trouble. Yet it is in better shape than any other economy in the Middle East. How can we mobilize for the unknown?

### **Understanding the Enemy**

One participant asked about social intelligence. We have to look at how our own policies affect the rest of the world. How can we bring social intelligence into our own defense planning system? One panelist noted that “social intelligence” is like “actionable intelligence,” that is, it may not be a real concept. We cannot negotiate with Osama bin Laden. Another panelist argued that the intelligence community is going through a seismic shift. It cannot depend on agents. We have to deal with the community the insurgents live in.

Another panelist challenged the current military educational system. Professional Military Education (PME) education is too history-bound. But we are adding the social side. It will be more culturally-oriented.

### **The Future: Pessimistic or Optimistic**

A panelist summed up the conference by saying that the trends are grave and the numbers bad. That is the pessimistic side. But America is enormously profitable and efficient. The efficiency is brittle, though. We are getting more networked. And yet the network is able to propagate shocking system perturbations—into the brittle economy and its efficiency. We cannot handle a gross economic shock. But it has happened before and we have figured it out—though we eat into our

economic cushion and our energy resources. We are carrying tremendous fraud and waste in our system.

The pessimists have usually been wrong, but not always. We live on sweep-up asymptotes, but then we change policies and get off the curves—as in medicine. We all become intelligence providers, but only if we come to grips with the problems.

Another panelist argued that we agree on the facts, but our political system is in paralysis. The system can't handle it.

A participant summarized the challenge facing the U.S. military. He argued that the bigger the military task, the better the U.S. does it, as in SIOP or on D-Day. But the military cannot do subtle, nuanced tasks. We ask strategic questions and we get tactical answers. We never do strategy. Americans are incapable of doing strategy. They have not had to think that carefully about strategy, even though they say they can do both.

We need the U.S. on the international scene. The U.S. is still the guardian and sheriff of the international order. In time, the war on terrorism will fade and great power hegemony will return. Russia and China, in the long run, will not settle into a world defined by the United States.

A participant ended the conference with several telling questions. We did containment in the 1950s and 1960s. It worked. Is there an analog today? Is there a strategy other than killing all of them? How can we keep the bad guys at bay until the situation straightens out?

Notes by W. Eugene Cobble, H. H. Gaffney, and Ken E. Gause, all of The CNA Corporation, with corrections by the participants.



## Longer summary of the conference

The following summary of the conference is organized as follows:

- Three aspects of warfare as discussed in the conference:
  - How actual shooting in the world has evolved, where it stands now, and how it might happen in the future;
  - How this shooting is done—on the battlefield, as it were, which could range from classic battlefields to urban warfare; and
  - How defense establishments may be evolving and reorganizing to cope with warfare as it is evolving.
- A summary of how these three aspects are playing out across the regions of the world.
- Projections of all of the above through 2020, organized along the three alternatives suggested by Amb. Hutchings:
  1. Pax Americana
  2. Davos world
  3. New world disorder
- Implications of all of the above for the United States and its policy-makers.
- General observations.
- Some concluding observations.

### I. Actual conflicts around the world

The participants in the conference agreed that war has not been eliminated from the human landscape. That is, people will still find ways to kill other people—beyond simple crime—for political or other reasons, and with more or less organization and preparation.

As Monty Marshall at the Center for International Development and Conflict Management (CIDCM) at the University of Maryland laid out, conflict in general has been declining after a long steady rise from after World War II to about 1989 or 1991. This decline includes state-on-state wars, in which the U.S. may have been most active since the end of the Cold War, with wars against Panama, Iraq, Serbia, the Taliban's Afghanistan, and Iraq again. Otherwise, the last state-on-

state war was Ethiopia vs. Eritrea, a war that could break out again at any moment. The number of countries in which internal wars have been taking place have also been declining, but some persist seemingly forever, the intensity of particular cases may be severe and new countries may fail. Marshall breaks internal conflicts down among ideological/revolutionary, ethnic, and organized crime/gangs. Internal wars would also seem to break down between those that involve guerrillas on the periphery vs. those that go downtown to the capital and involve urban warfare.

Beyond the possibilities of state-on-state conflicts and internal conflicts, the conference focused on terrorists and their attacks. There is considerable overlap of terrorism with internal conflicts, at least with regard to the Muslim world and its environs. The conference participants tended to extend the definition of insurgency to cover terrorists, and some would label the al Qaeda-led and inspired terrorism “a global insurgency.” That is, with the defeat of the Taliban and Osama bin Laden and Zawahiri in hiding, the terrorists, especially those that had been trained in the Afghan camps, have dispersed, in a virtual network. Terror appears more local, but with occasional inspiration from bin Laden and memories of association in the Afghan training camps. At the same time, the terrorists still have the advantage of the ease of global travel and internet communications.

The conference did not go deeply into the origins of internal conflicts. Marshall noted a series of conditions that lead to such conflicts, notably the failure or inadequacies of governance, compounded by poor economic performance and the corruption of governing elites. On a grander scale, some noted the difficulties Muslims were having with the intrusion of globalization into their cultures. This is aggravated by the failures of their governments to take care of people, especially as population growth has soared and unemployment or underemployment has become more widespread, especially for those of their people who have expected generous support from their governments (“rentiers”). The surprise in the post-Cold War era has been the emergence and growth of suicide bombings and indiscriminate attacks on civilians by terrorists. Against that, in many cases, states have lost “the monopoly of force” within their boundaries. Moreover, small arms have proliferated in many countries. Terrorists or insurgents would seem to have better intelligence about the societies in which they are lodged than their governments and certainly outside forces have.

As for the future, the potential for state-on-state conflicts has not disappeared: confrontations still persist. Particular attention was called to Asia, especially East Asia, as a prime source, considering the situation in Korea and the confrontations between China and Taiwan and between India and Pakistan over Kashmir. The United States is concerned about two rogues, North Korea and Iran and whether their acquisition of nuclear weapons could lead to their aggression. The U.S. has

declared it would attack a state giving sanctuary to terrorists or had weapons of mass destruction poised to attack the U.S., its allies, or its forces overseas.

No one thought that internal conflicts would entirely disappear, either. Pakistan and Afghanistan remain troubled, Iraq has hardly settled down, and terrorism in Saudi Arabia seems to be accelerating. Several states in Africa continue in turmoil.

Our speaker on Latin America noted that northern South America was a powder keg: while the FARC may be on the run in Colombia right now, they have spread to Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia—all wrapped into the drug trade as well.

## **II. On ways warfare is conducted in conflicts**

The conference essentially focused on warfare as that which is conducted during conflict. It was not something theoretical. The conflicts were those described in the previous section—state-on-state, internal, and attacks by terrorists. In these conflicts, killing and destruction takes place, and is done by people, almost always men, using weapons ranging from machetes to precision-guided munitions guided by satellite signals. “The battlefield” ranges across territory into urban areas. The classic battle areas of air and sea were not discussed at this conference. The era since the end of the Cold War has not involved them because the U.S. has been so dominant in both areas. And the future most foreseen by the participants did not include these areas—unless China were to be involved. It was noted that, as China’s economy shifts to the coastal areas, the government is more concerned with threats from the maritime direction than from the interior and the north. Rather, the descriptions for most of the world were usually of “low-intensity conflict” (which had always been described as pretty high-intensity by those involved in them) or terror and counter-terror.

### **What has taken place**

While the sheer incidence of conflicts has gone down since (and not because of) the end of the Cold War, warfare has still taken place. Most notably, the U.S. engaged in nine major combat operations from 1989 on, essentially with regard to seven situations (Panama, Iraq, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan) during which it demonstrated superior and advancing capabilities in planning, in defense suppression, in precision targeting and delivery from the air, and finally in ground operations with armor and close air support. This “American Way of War” provided the U.S. with far more experience in warfare than any other country and tended to discourage others from trying to keep up—though many in the U.S. feared that enemies would try to find ways to counter these U.S. superiorities. Nonetheless, no such counters appeared during the period from 1989 to 2004. In fact the enemies appeared defenseless and weak when

confronting the Americans' coordinated joint attack. Aside from American and Iraqi operations in Desert Storm, there has not been much armored combat or air-to-air combat, or artillery duels, or conventional ballistic missile use, though India and Pakistan had artillery duels near Kargil along the Line of Control in Kashmir in 1999.

One paradox of the American Way of War, as compared to classic war, was the ability of the U.S. to control its own casualties and collateral damage to infrastructure and civilians. At least one participant in the conference noted that this meant less killing and thus less of a sense on the other side that they had been defeated.

Aside from the American Way of War, the emerging dominant kind of warfare in the period, as discussed by the conference participants, was much more insurgency, that is, low-tech (not necessarily low-intensity) warfare. This was seen in Somalia, in Rwanda and continuing into Zaire/Congo, Liberia and Sierra Leone, and then in Iraq at an accelerating rate from April 2003 to the present. The continuing war in Afghanistan is of the same nature. The weapons of choice by the insurgents tend to be the standard trio of AK-47s, RPG-7s, and mortars, plus the roadside improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in Iraq. The world remains paved with these small arms. The constant battle between the Israelis and the Palestinians is similar, except that the Israelis are using heavy armored vehicles, Apache helicopters, and F-16s.

Finally, there is the emergence of global terrorism, with its use of suicide bombers, most notably from hijacked aircraft on 9/11, but mostly in train, car, and backpack bombs, as in Iraq, the West Bank and Gaza, Saudi Arabia, Madrid, Istanbul, Moscow, Chechnya, and other places. While it seems that civilians get in the way in an insurgency, in terror incidents they are the targets.

### **What did the participants make of these emerging patterns?**

They expect more of the same. They blur the lines between insurgency and local terror, and call the global terrorists global insurgents. It is now the Americans, or the Israelis, or the Indians shooting back after being shot at. The participants especially cited the decline of "the classic middle," with moves of warfare to the left (insurgency, terrorism) and to the right (to the acquisition and possible use of weapons of mass destruction—nuclear, chemical, biological). They did not talk much about the use of WMD, though they worry about an Indian-Pakistani war escalating to the use of nuclear weapons, or what North Korea might do. They saw warfare more than ever in the Clausewitzian terms of "warfare in the context of everything else," that is, with the cultural, social, political, and economic elements as definite parts of the warfare taking place or continuing. Under these circumstances, they worried whether attrition works—kill as many insurgents or



terrorists as you can encounter—or whether that simply stimulates the creation of more insurgents and terrorists.

Because of these factors, the participants saw the need to attack the roots, the causes of insurgency, not just the insurgents. At the same time, there were discussions of how Special Forces have become more crucial, and how more ground forces (Army and Marines) should be more Special Force-like, or at least that there should be more infantry than had otherwise been foreseen for the leaner, faster, expeditionary strike forces that had been the subject of “transformation.”

### **What do they see as the future in actual combat?**

Some worry about the reemergence of high-tech war, especially by China over the situation with Taiwan. Nobody said they expected North Korea to attack South Korea, or to fire nuclear weapons at the United States. They worry about major war between India and Pakistan escalating to nuclear use. No one ventured to say where the American Way of War might be applied next. This was a conference about warfare, not about nuclear proliferation by Iran and North Korea and the politics and diplomacy associated with those issues.

The greater worry was more failing governance, more failing states, more insurgencies, and more generation of terrorists. They couldn't see how Iraq, Afghanistan, or Israeli-Palestinian situations were going to evolve in any satisfactory way. They expect the global war on terror to be a long haul, punctuated by terrorist incidents and Special Forces raids. They also mentioned the “outsourcing” of such defense tasks to private contractors. The Europeans, especially, foresee their contributions as more determined, powerful peacekeeping or peace enforcement operations, that is, continuing the models applied in Bosnia and Kosovo. Steve Biddle warned that the experience in Afghanistan, where a small number of Special Forces combined with local irregular forces could effect regime change, could be applied only when the combat skills of the enemy were lower than those of the local allies of the U.S.

## **III. How defense establishments may adjust to these trends in warfare**

If the nature of conflicts and their warfare is migrating to the left (insurgency and terror) and right (weapons of mass destruction) and thus away from classic defense establishments and confrontations in the areas of persistent conflicts, these evolutions pose difficulties of adjustment and adaptation for the advanced countries who think they must resolve these conflicts. This was a conference of advanced nations, including Israel. They are all going through adjustments, which have been slow since the end of the Cold War.

The United States is in the vanguard of evolving its capabilities, especially given its wealth, its now extensive experience in actual combat (testing out its capabilities), and its temptation to be the sheriff of the world. No one saw a peer competitor to the United States arising. The U.S. has gone beyond “the revolution in military affairs” (RMA) to “transformation.” It was further clarified at this conference that transformation was not simply technological, but also cultural, human resources-oriented, organizational, teaming, and network-centric. This has become especially acute for the U.S. as it has gotten bogged down in Iraq, where its ground forces mingling with the local populations and their insurgents are under fire. And it also must cope with the global terrorists, through homeland defense, the pursuit of individual terrorists and their cells whether in other countries or at sea, and stabilization/nation-building to get at the roots of terrorism. While the American Way of War, as it has emerged, will persist and evolve as the core of U.S. defense planning, it becomes only one of the tasks of U.S. forces.

For the Europeans and Australians (Japan was not discussed), they are not quite sure which way to turn to confront the patterns of conflict. They are under pressure from the U.S. and in accordance with their own traditions to transform their organized forces into expeditionary forces. The British and French have long had such capabilities, but not other countries. And the British and French do not have all the new capabilities that are thought to be needed (e.g., airlift). At the same time, they have found they have been drawn into actual operations with peacekeeping-peace enforcement forces, whether in the Balkans for the Europeans or in Southeast Asia for the Australians. Those kind of operations have not required transformed capabilities. Their defense budgets are very constrained, both because of slow growth and European Union (EU) restrictions on incurring deficits of more than 3 percent of GDP, and they face bills to support their aging population, so they are strained as to which way to turn since they can’t do everything. All countries, the U.S. included, have Special Forces, though limited in numbers.

For both the Americans and the Europeans, it is hard to plan, train, and exercise for peacekeeping, stabilization, and nation-building functions to be carried out by the forces.

In any case, both American and European forces are shrinking in numbers, given the absence of a Soviet threat and continually rising costs of manpower, new systems, and maintenance.

In between is China, which aspires to shift to a more professional force, off quantity to quality, and from an internal and northern orientation to a maritime orientation as their economy takes off and shifts to the coastal regions. The reconquest of Taiwan is a strong motivator for the reconfiguration of their forces,

but it is not yet clear that they are assembling a complete expeditionary force to do so. It is the highest priority for the PLA, but it is not clear that the political leadership shares the same priority since their main concern is finding employment for the Chinese people so as to avoid internal unrest and enable better lives.

Zeev Maoz laid out three models for defense establishments in the Middle East, models that apply elsewhere as well. He noted that Egypt, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia have been modernizing their forces, but only in platforms and not into space, surveillance, and networking. South Korea and some of the Southeast Asian nations might also be included in this category. He saw Syria and Iran (and now in the past, Iraq) maintaining traditional, Soviet-style, militaries and, as the equipment they have is not replaced with free Soviet goods, turning instead to WMD and Scuds and No Dong missiles. North Korea is in the same category. But these countries hardly train and do not use space. His third category includes the non-state actors, that is, the radical movements, from insurgents to terrorists, who are not highly organized and are lightly equipped. We see them operating in the insurgencies that have emerged in Iraq, or as the late unlamented Taliban in Afghanistan, and in the FARC in Colombia. Some of these movements may well aspire to acquire WMD.

As the table that follows below lays out, while the U.S. and other advanced nations have some flexibility to adapt and transform their forces, the conference participants would agree that the countries where civil order has broken down, insurgencies have grown, and terrorists may have found breeding grounds have huge problems of governance ahead. They have to do better in bringing their people out of poverty while also being able to maintain internal security more effectively. At the very least, this would seem to indicate that the luxury of purchasing sophisticated aircraft, ships, and armor is not appropriate for the existing and persistent challenges. There is a greater need for gendarmerie-type forces to maintain order, while not oppressing the population. Whether a country like Saudi Arabia can arise to such challenges remains to be seen.

It was hard for the conference participants to shift off their concerns about insurgencies to the possible use of nuclear weapons. Missile defense was not discussed at the conference.

The following table summarizes the views of the various regions taken by the participants at the conference:

<b>Region</b>	<b>Conflicts expected</b>	<b>Ways of conducting warfare</b>	<b>Evolution of defense establishments</b>
United States	Terror attacks on homeland; preemptive interventions	American Way of War; Special Forces	Transformation; joint; netted; SOF; nation-building?
Europe/Australia	None; Balkans stability; terror attacks (e.g. Madrid);	Peace-enforcement in Balkans, Afghan, some in Iraq insurgency	With scarce resources, choice between PK and Transformation
East Asia	State-on-state potential; North Korea? Taiwan?	Still potential – classic; move to “right” (WMD)	China professional, quality over quantity; space, etc. NK to nuke.
Southeast Asia	Internal conflicts; terror: piracy; Indonesia especially.	Police work; SOF in remote areas; maritime patrols	Sophisticated equipment vs. patrol boats, SOF
South Asia (incl. Afghan.)	Afghan, Kashmir, NE India, Tamil insurgencies; terror; Pak chaos; India-Pak war?	Insurgencies vs. SOF & other ground forces; nuke war potential?	India-Pak to “right” (WMD) but also classic arms; Afghan organize police
Mid East/ North Africa	Al Qaeda attacks Saudis; terrorists create insurgencies in Iraq, Algeria; Israeli-Palestinian clash; Iran-Iraq war again?	Ground forces & police; Israel: Apaches & bulldozers; Wall. Suicide terrorists	Off classic defense purchases to police and better governance
Africa	Terrorists migrate to Sahel; internal conflicts & chaos in selected countries	Guerrilla bands & terrorists vs. ground forces, int’l. PK	No funds; U.S. tries to organize African PK forces
Latin America	Colombian insurgency; spread to neighbors	Ground forces, police vs. insurgents; war on drug traffickers	Colombia model: better ground forces, surveillance

## Models for the future

The Chairman of the NIC, Ambassador Hutchings, had suggested three alternative future worlds in the course of laying out the purposes of the 2020 project. They were:

1. **Pax Americana.** The U.S. as the regional sheriff around the world, at least at the beginning.
2. **Davos world.** It involves unfettered globalization. The unipolar moment would pass. The world would be benign as far as security goes, so there would not be too much military effort or activity.
3. **New world disorder.** Conflict would be rampant, especially within countries, and terror would be widespread. International cooperation and institutions would fray, or collapse, or would be eroded in their effectiveness.

These models also correspond to those set out by one of the presenters at the conference, who was addressing the future of nuclear weapons. His alternative futures were the Competitive, which is close to “Pax Americana,” but assumes other countries might rise to compete with the U.S. in the military sphere, the Cooperative, which compares to the “Davos World,” and the Chaos world, which corresponds to the “New World Disorder.” Thus, these triads of alternatives tend to bracket the possibilities.

The conference participants did not focus much on the future, much less 2020, nor on these kinds of alternatives. If anything, they were talking about “New World Disorder,” because that was where issues of warfare were focused—across the “arc of crisis” or “the Gap” stretching across the middle seam of the world, from Colombia over to Indonesia and the southern Philippines. Yet even here, the participants were focused on Iraq and Afghanistan and struggling as to whether the Western world was in a clash of civilizations with the Islamic world. But Kurt Campbell’s warning about a rising China and the possibilities of state-on-state conflict in Northeast Asia, complicated by nuclear weapons, was on the table for consideration.

There were two remarks during the conference about future projections. Colin Gray warned about relying on trends, in the sense of extrapolations, as Ambassador Hutchings has also warned. The especially telling Gray point was that trends expire, they peter out, while new paradigms slowly appear. Moreover, surprises occur. However, General Scales noted that 16 years can pass in the blink of an eye. Some situations simply drag on without resolution, like North Korea’s economy, which otherwise looks to be in complete collapse, or the Israeli-Palestinian stand-off, or Kashmir.

It is possible to distribute the discussions that took place in the conference among the three alternative futures out through 2020 in the following table:

<b>Alternative Future</b>	<b>State-on-State conflicts</b>	<b>Internal conflicts and insurgencies</b>	<b>Global and local terror</b>
Pax Americana	Hard to envisage. U.S. military dominance continues. Except China vs. Taiwan, India vs. Pakistan, uncertain on Iran, North Korea Others content & with social priorities.	If Iraq and Afghanistan settle down and peaceful, most other internal conflicts localized and not system-threatening, and maybe U.S. more prone to intervene	Persist, especially since many Islamic countries left behind, hate America, and internal governance not improved. Sporadic major terror incidents, including in U.S.
Davos World	Low likelihood, low relevance. China, India fully integrated in globalization & economic priorities. Governments facilitate business expansion, provide for social safety nets, not defense	Continue, given that many poor countries, e.g., in Africa, still fall behind. But localized, and maybe greater cooperation among advanced countries to both peace-keep and provide economic assistance.	Might become increasingly irrelevant and isolated, though huge challenge to bring Islamic, especially Arab, world into globalization. No one would predict terror goes away easily.
New World Disorder	Could see reversions to protected markets, doors closed to immigrants, clashes of civilizations, financial crises, new opposing blocs, thus new defense efforts—and especially if new nuke members and missiles	Same protective factors for advanced world leave huge gap with left-behind world, with more state failures and internal conflicts, less tendencies for advanced countries to intervene	Breeding grounds for terrorists increased, greater desperation for terrorists to circulate globally, maybe greater opportunities to steal or get WMD from rogues

## **Policy implications of the changing nature of warfare for the United States**

The conference participants noted how the U.S. is bogged down in Iraq and Afghanistan now. They noted that the Bush Administration had started out intending to give strategic emphasis to China and East Asia—a response to traditional geopolitical and geostrategic impulses as to where the major competition would be in the future that might also guide force structure, acquisitions, and deployment plans in the absence of the Soviet Union. But, after 9/11, the U.S. made a major strategic shift into the Middle East. The conference participants thought it would continue to be the region of major interest until it

had settled down, the global war on terror was under control, and the countries in the region were making progress in political liberalization and economic growth—all shaky possibilities. Especially important for these resolutions, per the participants, was a re-immersion by the U.S. in the process of establishing peace between the Israelis and Palestinians. In short, the major threat now was from global terror, and its breeding grounds were in the Middle East (though extending into Southeast Asia and Africa as well). Whether the situation in the Middle East would be satisfactorily resolved by 2020 cannot be known. It was noted that, at the moment, the U.S. feels “non-triumphant.”

The U.S. has demonstrated great military prowess to the world since the end of the Cold War. This prowess is unlikely to be challenged and may have effectively discouraged many countries from trying to emulate or catch up to the U.S. militarily—though some say such dominance, from historical experience, is unlikely to be sustained forever. The major question in this respect remains China, whose obsession with Taiwan is leading to its military modernization, which in turn may accord it strategic dominance in its region, along with its dominating economy.

It is also not clear where the American Way of War might be exercised next. Yet 12 years passed between its fullest application in Desert Storm in 1991 and then in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) in 2003—a period comparable to the 16 years that will pass to 2020. At the same time, it was pointed out that the U.S. “crushed ants,” i.e., did not face any opponent capable of mounting comparable challenges in the battlespace. There is no question that the U.S. will want to maintain and improve these demonstrated capabilities, taking advantage of lessons learned and its urge for continued transformation.

Yet the experience in Iraq has also demonstrated that the greatest challenge to the U.S. in coping with the changing nature of warfare may be in its ability to counter insurgencies, to stabilize internal conflicts, and to rebuild nations. This requires sustained effort, possibly over years, rather than the quick in-quick out striking power that advocates of transformation have promoted. It requires a diversification of the forces into ground warfare against insurgents, urban warfare, civic action, and constabulary and peacekeeping functions. It was noted that the U.S. periodically neglects and has to reinvent and relearn counter-insurgency. Moreover, these sustained efforts require the U.S. Government to mount both interagency and multinational efforts, rather than the U.S. military doing everything alone. It was said at the conference that no military alone has ever beaten an insurgency. These challenges represent new slants on the nature of transformation. In any case, the participants recognized that transformation is not just a matter of technology, but also of culture, human learning, teaming, and organization.

Beyond that lies the global war on terror. It is hard to predict whether it would be satisfactorily resolved before 2020. Most participants agreed that it will be a long haul, similar to the Cold War. But it could be punctuated by horrific incidents. The conference focused most intensely on countering insurgency in the Middle East and did not discuss homeland defense. The global war on terror also led to a fair amount of discussion of the use and possible expansion of Special Forces. It was pointed out that they did have their limits, especially when up against a capable opposing force. Incremental expansion of Special Forces was recommended. Moreover, use of Special Forces in the global war on terror is going to depend on much better intelligence. At the same time, counter-insurgency, nation-building, and the global war on terror indicated new emphases on ground forces for the U.S., in contrast to the leading edge of precision air strikes that characterized the most successful American operations from 1991 through April 2003.

Otherwise, the participants thought the U.S. government should be pragmatic, and should exercise leadership to attract allies, especially among the advanced nations with whom the U.S. has a mutual interest in maintaining world stability. They thought the U.S. should not over-extend itself, but limit its priorities to 2 or 3 (which is what the leadership at any given time seems capable of handling in any case). The pursuit of Middle East peace seems to come out as the top priority, but this is not a problem for the U.S. military. The U.S. should pursue change in an evolutionary way, not by some grand design. That is, it should stay engaged and nudge change—staying power is important. There was also an expressed need for greater synthesis in military matters between civilian and military leaderships, rather than one side being just subservient to the other.

The conference had discussed how the nature of warfare was changing from classic state-on-state, force-on-force engagements to either the left (insurgency and terror) or the right (weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, and the missiles to deliver them). The discussions were mostly about the shift to the left, and very little was said about the right. Nonetheless, it was pointed out that the U.S. would preserve its Triad of strategic nuclear capabilities at least through 2020 and would be clearly superior to any country in this regard.

## **General conclusions**

### **1. 2020 is only 16 years away—roughly the same time as from the Invasion of Panama in 1989 to today.**

Superficially, there doesn't seem to be a great difference between the American Way of War as it was applied in Panama and as it is today because many of the



weapons, the overarching command arrangements, and the public presentations are very familiar.

Yet, when one digs beneath the surface, the differences in virtually every facet of how the U.S. fought then and how it fights today are staggering. Vastly improved joint command and control, vastly improved surveillance and reconnaissance that is netted together, vastly improved precision in the application of fire power (improved in the sense of hitting what it aims at—not necessarily improvements in deciding what it aims and shoots at.)

By the same token, some of the problems of Panama are still with us today, such as trying to find individual leaders and undertaking combat in an urban environment.

The point is that, when we look out at 2020, much will be familiar both in terms of weapons and platforms and of the difficulties imposed by difficult terrain, urban environments, and elusive targets.

## **2. The ongoing insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan have sucked much of the oxygen out of efforts to talk about the future.**

The conferees, almost across the board, had a hard time escaping the issues of the day. As a result, much of the discussion revolved around a future associated with insurgencies, running terrorists to ground, and dealing with radical Islamists—and dealing with the Islamic environment.

While this may indeed be the main character of the future of conflict, it is appropriate to consider other alternatives.

For example, only one panelist, Colin Gray from the U.K., was willing to speculate about a re-emergence of great power rivalry by 2020. Thinking specifically about Russia and China, he challenged the prevalent notion of most panelists that “decisive war between major states is rapidly moving toward history’s dustbin.”

He argued that, because of today’s dramatic imbalance of military power in favor of the United States, potential rivals rule out policies that might lead to hostilities with it. But when rival powers feel ready to challenge the U.S., he believes that the prospect of major war between great powers could return. Think for example of the existing flashpoint of Taiwan. This point seems to make the case for trying to maintain U.S. overmatching superiority well into the future.

## **3. The focus on Iraq and insurgency led to a great deal of discussion at the conference about how to best deal with a future that is liable to be dominated**

**by low intensity conflict and counter-terrorism. The implications for the U.S. are as follows:**

- First, the U.S. has some ability to shape that future. One way to limit insurgencies may be to limit the number of regimes one attempts to change by force. Avoiding regime change avoids the internal disorder that may follow. In the future, we may see more punitive expeditions—teaching another country lessons, as the Chinese say.
- Second, the U.S. military is organized, trained and equipped to deal with major state conflict—the least likely occurrence in the future, even if the U.S. must hedge against it in order to dissuade and deter it from occurring.

Military transformations must take into account the need among Americans and their allies for greater social and cultural awareness of potential conflict zones—especially in the Islamic world. It must take into account the need for stabilization forces.

- Third, while Special Forces will be increasingly important, the successes they had in Afghanistan and Kurdish Iraq were *sui generis*—dependent on an inept foe and a friendly indigenous ground force.

The friendly indigenous ground force has to be better than the foe for this model to work. As the U.S. learned in Afghanistan, when U.S. forces and the Northern Alliance were up against Al Qaeda, rather than the Taliban, a SOF/Northern Alliance/U.S. air power model did not work as well.

SOF will play a big role in missions that seek out small groups of fugitive individuals deep in the interior of hostile countries. SOF's advantages are strategic reach, independent direct action capability, human intelligence collection, and a small footprint.

#### **4. A fourth major point revolves around how best to achieve strategic results in low intensity conflict.**

According to one panelist, Ralph Peters, a lesson the U.S. has willfully misread is that there is no substitute for shedding the enemies' blood in adequate quantities—the enemy must be convinced practically and graphically that he is defeated. Basically, he claims attrition of the enemy works. He makes the point that if you have an enemy that views death as a promotion, you cannot shock and awe him into surrender. Peters points to the total defeat of Germany and Japan as the instructive model.

Martin Van Creveld took an opposite view based on the Israeli example. Unlike the U.S. in Iraq, Israel has every advantage in its fight against the Palestinian insurgents/terrorists. The Israelis:

- Know the terrain and culture intimately;
- Have an abundance of Arabic speakers;
- Are brilliant in execution;
- Know the enemy completely;
- Have superb intelligence;

Yet they have been unable to stop the insurgency and terrorism simply by killing. He said we need to get at root causes (he calls U.S. intervention in Iraq a huge strategic blunder.)

### **5. Bottom Line:**

The nature of warfare is not likely to change much by 2020. It will be some mix of state-on-state and ideological/revolution or ethnic conflict. In this sense, the experience of the past 15 years may provide a general forecast of the next 15 years. There is an old maritime aphorism that holds, “It is a mistake to steer by your wake.” However, in the case of forecasting the nature of conflict in the future, it is hard to escape the perception that the past decade and a half is probably the best available roadmap to the future. While the specific circumstances of conflicts will be different, nonetheless the variety in intensity, the geographic locus of conflicts in “the gap” between north and south, and the causal factors of the conflicts are likely to be similar. The particular concerns of the participants at this conference were insurgencies and terror arising from badly governed or failing states, with global implications.

Like the Cold War, global terror and the need by both local states and the advanced world to wage war against the terrorists increasingly seems as though it will be a main preoccupation and could go on for many years. Therefore, U.S. planning and thinking has to assume some of the same characteristics that it did during the Cold War—that is, taking the long view, making a sustained effort, and anticipating the need to be flexible, agile, and adaptable, finding new solutions to unanticipated problems.

### **Some final observations**

If one were to draw some very general impressions from the discussions at the conference, they might be as follows:

1. Around the world, people will continue to kill people. It is ingrained in human nature. How organized this killing is, is another matter. Most of the world is not at war now, but this conference was focused on where conflicts, warfare, shooting was taking place or the potential still existed for its outbreak.
2. But at the sovereign state level—the convention by which the world is divided up—war among states may be declining, especially in the environment of post-industrial economic globalization. This in turn means the continued decline of classic military establishments in Europe, Russia, and the Middle East states.
3. In this respect, the Cold War—and its end—has had a salutary effect. First of all, the drop-off of conflicts across the 1990s, both state-on-state and internal, has been dramatic, however one might be distracted by the current situation in Iraq. One recalls that most conflicts in the world had been aggravated or fomented by the Soviets. But mostly, the overhang of a huge number of nuclear weapons and the maintenance of huge military establishments by both the U.S. and Soviet Union tended to make other countries' efforts look trivial and futile—except perhaps in the Middle East. But even there, military establishments languish with old equipment since there are no more free goods to be obtained from a vanished Soviet Union.
4. But where the possibilities of state-on-state conflicts remain, in South and East Asia, military establishments are being transformed and modernized, though they are unlikely to expand their capabilities to the extent that the United States continues to maintain and the former Soviet Union did, given the constraints of modern economies, with their state budgets and social safety nets.
5. It is hard to predict the future. Conflicts come and go, may arise as a surprise, may be more or less serious (i.e., global or regional system-shaking or threatening), and defense establishments take a longer time to change than before, despite what some say about unforeseen technological developments emerging from commercial sources. A period of 16 years (through 2020) is, under one point of view, a short time, but also stretches the imagination. As was pointed out at the conference, looking back by decades, we (the participants representing the advanced world) never predicted things as they came out.
6. We don't know how brittle the world or individual countries may be. That is, we don't know what might cause a calamitous collapse, whether

financial, a failure of governance, or the flaring of conflict. What may be more important is the recovery from such events.

7. But the world is more transparent. We all know about small events happening in the corners of the world. What we have not done is to improve our abilities to assess and reach relevant judgments about what the consequences of small events may be across an increasingly connected world.

Russia was seldom mentioned at this conference. There was a brief reference to their maintaining their nuclear weapons and one commentator speculated about their return to military prominence by 2020. *Sic transit gloria mundi*.





